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THE
COMPANY
DOCTOR

BY

H. E. ROOD

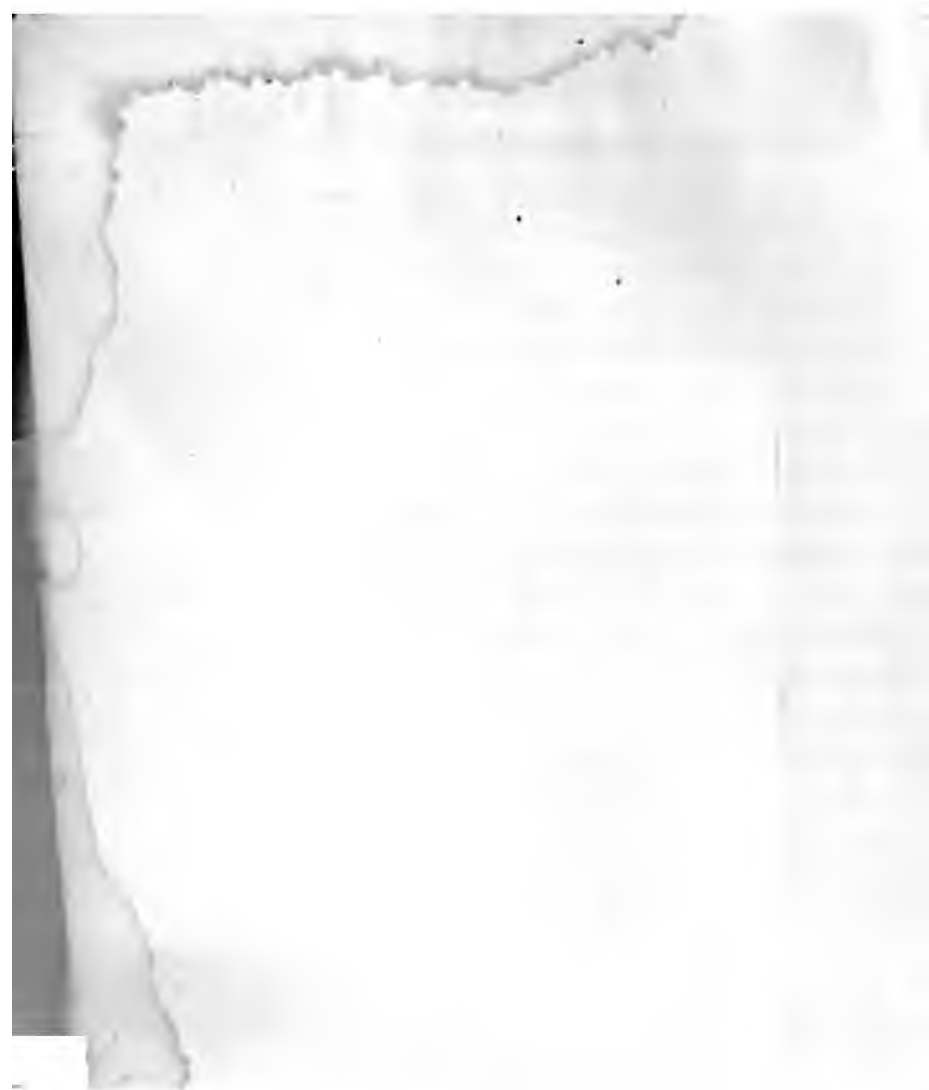


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THE
COMPANY DOCTOR

An American Story

BY
HENRY EDWARD ROOD



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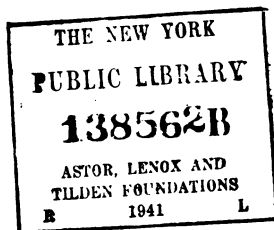
NEW YORK

THE MERRIAM COMPANY

67 FIFTH AVENUE

c 1895

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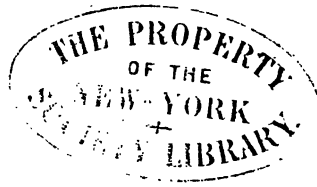
PREFACE.

THIS story was written with the earnest hope that it might be of some slight service in arousing the American people to a realization of the dangers which will result from unrestricted immigration. The author has no apologies to offer. He has spent some of the best years of his life in the localities and among the people described in "The Company Doctor," for the single purpose of obtaining positive, definite information which he feels Americans *must* have laid before them. About thirty-five per cent of the incidents following he can vouch for, and fully fifty per cent additional are told as facts by men and women of highest repute. As to the extortions practised by mine-operators, clergymen, and officers of justice, the reader must remember that they occurred in a remote region and were carefully hidden from superior authorities.

During the past two years of business depres-

sion the number of immigrants has declined. But the flood will sweep hither again as soon as commercial prosperity returns. Of this there can be no doubt.

THE AUTHOR.



THE COMPANY DOCTOR.

CHAPTER I.

A DOZEN men, a like number of women, and a score of youths and maidens and children lounged about the Myrtle Railroad Station, awaiting the train which was due at 5.30 P.M. The station itself consisted of a small, dingy, frame building, of but one story, perhaps twenty feet square. There was no platform before it, and but a single track; for Myrtle was far off the main line, a mining town in the anthracite regions of Pennsylvania.

Everything suggested this fact. All of the men wore flannel shirts and soft hats or caps, and most of them rubber boots. All but a few had just ceased work on the day-shift, and, on the way homeward for supper, had stopped at the station. And these men were covered from head to foot with a layer of coal-dust that made the whites of their eyes almost luminous by sharp

contrast. They carried dinner pails on their arms, and in each cap, just above the peak, was a naked lamp, several smoking still, showing that their owners had recently come out of the mine.

The rarefied air was clear and bracing (for Myrtle stood 1,600 feet above tide-water), and the men were a jolly set, joking and chatting gayly with the women and girls. The latter, too, were full of life, being as a rule hearty and strong, with ruddy cheeks, and frames betokening great powers of endurance. But in that group of forty or fifty persons were half a dozen cripples. This lad, hobbling around with a crutch, has lost a leg; so has that man yonder, and that other one leaning against the telegraph-pole. The brawny, rawboned Irishman lighting his pipe in the doorway—Patrick Burney he is, and a very important man too—had his left eye blown out ten years since in an explosion, and his friend, Mike Boyle, striding up and down the track, had an arm mashed three years ago next month; and it had to come off.

A dozen rods down the track, on the hither side, was a black mass sixty feet high and extending quarter of a mile away, where Number One breaker lifted its ungainly length into the air.

J. A. V. N.

Strangers imagined that great pile to be anthracite coal; but it was merely culm, the refuse slate and dirt deposited when coal has been screened. It had been taken from the breaker and dumped here from queer little cars that rumbled over temporary rails. Many years had elapsed since that culm-bank was started, and it was still growing a little larger each day, as carload after carload was deposited. The rails were laid along the top of the pile, and there, sharply outlined against the light blue sky, were seen the silhouettes of driver-boy, mule, and car, as another load of black culm was emptied upon the gigantic black bank.

At the base of the bank was a level tract of several acres, upon which proud oak-trees had bestowed their shade long ago. The trees were standing yet, here and there; but over the grassy soil the rains of two decades had washed particles from the culm-bank, until the entire tract was buried beneath soggy, black dirt several feet in depth. The oaks, once of luxuriant foliage and pleasing aspect, were without bark, leafless, withered, dried. The sulphurous qualities in the culm poisoned them fatally; but they still stood with gaunt limbs uplifted, as if calling down curses from heaven upon their destroyers. They

looked like skeletons of sentries who died while on guard, and who were so determined not to move that their bony frames remained straight years after the uniforms had rotted and the flesh had fallen away.

The scene was that of desolation itself.

But the throng of loungers at the station had not long to wait, pleasant though joking and chatting might be; for scarcely had half-past five been marked on the clock over the Company store, when the train appeared—an old-fashioned locomotive and tender, and two dirty, clumsy cars, each about two-thirds the size used at the present time. In five minutes a steamer trunk had been tumbled out of the baggage car, a single passenger had stepped from the other, and away the jolting cars rattled.

The arrival was a strange man to the town, Doctor Malcolm Curtis, who had been graduated scarcely a year since from a famous medical school in New York. His dress proclaimed him a resident of that city, and consisted of rich materials, fashioned in the latest style. Curtis looked curiously at the swarthy, grimy, bearded miners, and approached Patrick Burney, who seemed to be a leader.

"Pardon me," said the young physician, "but where is the hotel?"

Burney puffed his dudeen in silence for a few moments, meanwhile closely scanning Curtis.

"Do ye be th' new Comp'ny Docthor, sorr?" he finally asked.

"I hope so. Why?" Malcolm replied, with a happy smile.

"Bekase I loike yer looks; thot's th' whoy, me bonny buck! And bekase ony mon about this collhiery who ill-threats th' Compn'y Docthor is loikely to dthrop into a mine-hole some dhark night an' be dhrowned. Isn't thot so, byes?" he added, addressing his fellows, and concluding: "Whin an ixplosion bursts out yer oye, or a phall av coal crushes yer arrum—*thin* is th' toime whin we wud *pray* to th' Compn'y Docthor. Coome along, sorr, let me show yez th' hotil. . . . An', byes, put thot thrunk in yer hands an' folly us."

Away went the tall, brawny miner, with Malcolm Curtis at his side, and back of them two others bore the trunk.

An hour later the young physician was eating supper in the hotel, a large frame structure of two stories. The only other person at the table was a pale, thin young man, who looked up as the stranger appeared, and said:

"Good evening. Are you Doctor Curtis?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. We expected you. Mr. Payne said you were coming. My name is Weeks, and I am tutor to Mr. Payne's son Jack."

"Yes," said Malcolm, shaking the proffered hand, "I came up to look the ground over. Mr. Payne kindly asked me to accept the position of Company Doctor here. Does he own all the mines about Myrtle?"

"Oh, no! None of them. He merely leases them from the railroad company and operates them, paying the company a royalty on all the coal he mines. I sincerely hope you will remain."

Albert Weeks spoke this last sentence so heartily that Curtis looked again at him. The tutor was a tall, slender young man, with features expressing refinement, and his whole being betokened a scholarly temperament.

"My first impressions are so pleasant that I hope so, too," Malcolm responded, acknowledging the other's compliment by a smile.

He helped himself to a hot biscuit, and while buttering it said:

"Have you been here long?"

"For a year," replied Weeks. "I tried news-

paper work in New York after leaving college, but my health broke down and I came here for rest and because of the altitude. Usually I am contented with my books, but occasionally I get very tired of the lonely situation, the lack of congenial companions. It was from this selfish reason that I was so glad to hear of your coming."

"You know I haven't decided yet," said Malcolm; "but when Mr. Payne asked the Dean of our faculty to suggest some one, the Dean told me of the splendid opportunities here for surgical work."

"They are fine. Amputations and compound fractures are of weekly occurrence, and trephining is by no means infrequent. Then of course you would have a general medical practice to attend, but as a rule people seldom become sick here, except those who suffer from miner's asthma. The pay, you know, is large."

"No," laughed Curtis, "I don't know anything about that feature of the situation."

"Well, Mr. Payne will probably explain it."

The men continued conversing about various matters agreeably, as men do while eating.

Upon finishing the meal they stepped out upon the veranda and lighted cigars.

"It is a charming evening," said Albert;

"would you care to take a walk and look the town over?"

"By all means."

They left the hotel and proceeded up the hill away from the railroad station. Great trees lined the roads, and accepting the hint of a merry breeze the leaves danced and frolicked gleefully. Upon either side of the road were a hundred houses standing two in a block, equally distant from each other and from the pathway. Each of the dwellings was a two-storied frame structure. Each was painted a dull brown. Each contained the same number of windows and doors.

"They are as alike as if cut from the same pattern," said Curtis.

"And such is the case," Weeks assented. "They are all owned by Mr. Payne, too. Up here they are known as 'Company Houses.' Everything is 'Company' in the coal regions. You are to be a Company Doctor, you know. Then there is the Company Store, and the Company Priest—although, of course, the latter is not known as such; but he is, in reality—and, oh! lots of other things."

"But all these houses, like so many peas, seem very monotonous. I suppose the broken fences were once regular, but excepting for a morning-

glory vine here and there, nothing relieves the dull exteriors. They all look, too, as if merely placed here temporarily, as if tents pitched here for a night. Are there no brick buildings in Myrtle?"

"Hardly! You see it wouldn't be safe. All the town is undermined. Seven or eight hundred feet below this wide road, for example, are men at work, and mules are hauling carloads of coal back and forth constantly. Every once in a while part of the surface caves in, and in such a case a brick building would topple over, although frame houses are almost perfectly safe."

About the Company houses, however, Curtis noticed with pleasure various picturesque groups. In one doorway, for example, stood a muscular Irishwoman, scouring a great tin dishpan. And next door was another with a baby in her arms, and two youngsters holding fast to her skirts. A pretty girl of seventeen years was chatting with her lover at the gate, and leaning on the fence near by were two red-shirted miners with bared feet, puffing stumpy, black "dudeens" and discussing their labor organization.

This was the hour of rest in the mining town. The men on the day shift had had supper, and the women were waiting for dusk before putting

the children to bed. And there, in the middle of the road, a dozen brawny young driver-boys were pitching quoits; and from the steps of a house across the way came the notes of an Irish reel which old Granny McGuire was playing upon an accordion. Granny was ninety years of age, but her eyes never knew glasses. Her great feet vigorously stamped, keeping time to the music, and she blew huge clouds of heavy smoke into the air at the end of each bar.

It was all strange to the New Yorker—the people, the houses, the costumes, the very atmosphere; and especially the number of cripples seen here and there. He spoke of this to Albert Weeks, who replied:

“Yes, but you see them all over the mining regions, men and boys who have lost an arm or a leg. Theirs is a perilous occupation. Accidents are a matter of course here. The carelessness with which people regard human life is simply astonishing. I can’t understand such things. I come from New England, you know.”

“Indeed!” rejoined Curtis. “So did my father’s family.”

It was not long before the young men discovered that they had acquaintances in common.

They reached the summit of the hill, and were

enjoying the beautiful sunset, when Malcolm noticed a drag approaching, drawn by splendid bay horses. Between the young men and the drag stood a great truck laden with timber; the driver had halted to rest his team of six mules, but unfortunately he had stopped on the wrong side of the road. As Albert Weeks observed this, he uttered a chuckle of delight.

"There will be some fun now!" he exclaimed. "There comes the Payne family in the drag, and the mule team hasn't turned out."

"But the drag can easily pass on the other side."

"Not easily while Mrs. Payne is in it," replied the tutor. "You don't know her majesty. Wait and see."

Curtis had not long to wait. The span of spirited bays soon were dancing and pawing in front of the timber truck. A broad-shouldered man with gray whiskers was driving them. Back of him sat a girl of nineteen, with golden hair, blue eyes, and pink cheeks. Her figure was queenly. She was dressed in the height of fashion. By her side was a small, elderly woman with white hair and an eagle face. Her lips closed as if by a vise; her piercing black eyes snapped with fire. Mrs. Payne did not weigh

over ninety pounds, but the strapping muleteer started in affright as he suddenly saw her, and crossed himself. Then he made every effort to get his heavy truck out of the way. As the nervous bay horses dashed by he sighed with relief.

One of those in the carriage, Mrs. Payne, seemed not to see Albert Weeks, for he was not recognized by her; although it was clearly impossible that he or his companion should have been overlooked. But as the vehicle dashed by, Curtis noticed that Gertrude Payne was blushing furiously. That was the first time the girl had ever been ashamed of her mother.

The two young men walked on in silence for some distance. Weeks did not care to refer to the scene, and Malcolm was too well bred to speak thereof, especially as he did not know what were the relations of the tutor to the mine-operator's family. But as they said good-night, an hour later, Albert remarked:

"As you are likely to be here some time, Doctor Curtis, you might as well know that Mrs. Payne is like a stick of dynamite—liable to explode at any moment. Remember that."

"Thank you, I will. Good-night."

CHAPTER II.

CURTIS left the little hotel the next morning before nine o'clock and started for Mr. Payne's office.

"I will get there before he does," he said to himself, "and have an opportunity to talk before he opens his morning's mail."

But in this he was mistaken. He entered the building devoted to the Company offices and met the Paymaster, a pleasant-faced man of fifty years, named Johnson.

"Mr. Payne was here for an hour this morning, but he left thirty minutes ago. Won't you sit down?"

"Thanks," said Malcolm, accepting the invitation. "Do you think he'll be back soon?"

"Can't say, I'm sure." Mr. Johnson filled a briarwood pipe, and lighted it, and leaned back in his chair.

"I heard of your arrival," he continued. "Weeks was in for a couple of minutes this morning, and mentioned the fact. He said he thought you might be persuaded to stay here."

Paymaster Johnson said this with a rising inflection, and the physician took the cue.

"I think I should like it. Does Mr. Payne usually get here so early?"

"Yes, every day at seven. He's a tremendous worker, and the rest of us do not lounge around. His industry is contagious. If you're in a hurry to see him you might step around to the house. I don't know but that you'd better do so anyhow. For all I know he might drive over to Keytown and be gone all day. He said something about that possibility."

Malcolm knew where Mr. Payne's residence was; he had seen it the evening previous. A great frame structure, it rested on the summit of a gently rising hillock, in the center of a park. All around the latter was a strong fence, but this was concealed by a hedge nearly fifteen feet high. A porter's lodge, occupied by the head gardener, was at the main entrance to the grounds, and the latter were filled with trees, excepting for a lawn of two acres directly in front of the mansion. The young physician entered the park, and proceeded along the path by the gravelled driveway until he reached the veranda. He approached the door and was about to ring when it was opened from the inside, and he met

Mrs. Payne face to face. Now Curtis was not easily confused, but the memory of that scene on the hill, only the night before, recurred to him with vivid distinctness. He had wondered whether the mine-operator's wife were usually in a peppery temper, and her sudden, unexpected appearance made him hesitate for a moment. But his hat was doffed immediately, as he said:

"Excuse me, is Mr. Payne at home?"

"I don't know," she responded with an engaging smile. "You are Dr. Curtis, are you not? Well, come in and I will see if he has gone yet. I am very glad you came up."

She spoke so kindly, there was such an honest welcome in her tones, that he followed her in a curiously confused frame of mind. He had not expected such a charming greeting.

On the way to the reception-room they passed a slouching man-of-all-work, whom the little woman absurdly called her butler, and to him she said:

"August, see if Mr. Payne has gone driving yet."

They entered the reception-room, a small square apartment, in which the prevailing colors were white, and that soft, delicate, Russian blue

which is seen on enamelling done in the Caucasus.

"When did you arrive? Did you have a nice journey?"

As Mrs. Payne asked these questions and listened to the replies, she looked at Malcolm with interest—not such as to cause embarrassment, however. She saw a tall man of 26 years, erect and lithe; with broad shoulders, robust chest, and well-shapen hands and feet. His dark hair and mustache were soft though heavy; his large, intelligent eyes were surmounted with firmly drawn, generous eyebrows. The forehead was broad but not unusually high, and the lines of his chin and lower jaw indicated strength of purpose. His clothing fitted him, and was selected with good taste—two things that counted for much in Mrs. Payne's estimation. He had a pleasant way of speaking, too, and his face lighted with animation as he told how he and Patrick Burney strode along the road to the hotel, followed by two Irishmen carrying his trunk. When they had ceased laughing at the comical picture he drew in a few, terse sentences, there was a short silence, and Mrs. Payne said:

"Well, do you think you will stay here?"

"I should like to; but I haven't seen your hus-

band, so I don't know whether I should suit him, you know."

"If that is all, consider yourself engaged as our Company Doctor. I will vouch for your impression on Mr. Payne."

"You're very kind," said Curtis, smiling at what he supposed was a pleasantry. But the other was serious, and told him where the doctor's office stood, just opposite the hotel.

"I hope you can begin at once," she added. "There is no very severe case of illness here now, I believe; but you can never tell when one will occur. Since your predecessor left, two weeks ago, one of the Keytown doctors has been attending to the work; but he says that this and his own practice is too much for him. The other Company Doctor, who has just left," she added abruptly after a pause, "was an exceedingly incompetent, disagreeable person. It's a wonder to me he didn't kill off half the population!"

Curtis was greatly surprised at her change in tone and expression. Her last two sentences seemed to be snapped from between her teeth by a spring. Her eyes flashed, and she nodded her white head vigorously. He didn't know exactly what to say, but at a venture asked:

"How long was he practising here?"

"Oh, for several years; but we never found him out until recently. Well, August?"

The butler had returned and was standing in the doorway.

"Mr. Payne has gone to Keytown."

"Very well."

As August departed Malcolm began his adieus; but both he and Mrs. Payne were startled by howls of rage which swept up the long hallway. These screams were mingled with the sound of scuffling feet—a large chair or a table fell with a crash. Half a minute later a sturdy boy of twelve years appeared at the door, yelling, scratching, striking at a young girl who held him as would a vise. And Curtis recognized in her Gertrude Payne, whom he had seen in the drag the evening previous. She was clad in a riding-habit, but her hat was awry, her stock had been dropped, and a seam in one gauntlet was torn in the struggle with her young brother. She started and blushed deeply at thus coming unexpectedly upon a stranger, but not for an instant did she loosen her grasp.

"Gertrude! Jack! What does this mean?" cried Mrs. Payne.

"It means, mother," responded the girl, "that

this imp has been behaving outrageously toward Mr. Weeks again."

"He didn't dare strike my boy?"

"No; but I wish he had thrashed him within an inch of his life. Come, Mr. Weeks, let mother see you."

The tutor stepped forward. His collar and tie were disarranged. His face looked unusually pale, because upon it, as upon his linen and even his hair, were blotches of ink. But he was calm.

"I have come to offer my resignation," he observed, and then bowed to the ladies and quietly withdrew.

"Jack!" exclaimed Mrs. Payne. "What *does* this mean?"

Gertrude shook him, boxed his ears soundly, and thrust him into a chair.

"D—don't mean nuthin'," he whimpered. "They wuz a strange dorg in th' path and I threw an ink-bottle at him out th' wind'r, an' th' ink spilled in th' air and flew all over Mr. Weeks."

"Go to your father's study and stay there until you hear from me."

Mrs. Payne spoke in ordinary tones, but she was terribly angry. Her head was held high in air, her nostrils were dilated, and sparks of fire

seemed to shoot from her eyes. The boy stumbled out of the room, rubbing his ears, and still whining like a whipped puppy. And then the woman, who could command others, instantly commanded herself.

"My dear," she calmly remarked to her daughter, "permit me to introduce Doctor Curtis."

"This is rather an exciting meeting," Gertrude said, offering him one hand and trying with the other to arrange her hat, for it had nearly fallen off.

"Yes, indeed!" laughed Curtis. "And I'm so glad, too. I do hate conventionalities—any more than one must have, I mean."

"Well, you certainly should be satisfied now," she replied.

They sat down for a few moments, and then the physician took his leave. Down the long, winding driveway he walked, past the lodge and out upon the highway. Thereupon he proceeded toward the hotel, where he met Paymaster Johnson, who remarked that Mr. Payne had returned and was in the office.

"He was asking after you," continued Johnson; "and I'd stop, if I was you."

"All right. I will. Many thanks."

"Don't mention it. Did you see Mrs. Payne?"

"Yes," chuckled the other, "and she engaged me on the spot to act as Company Doctor."

"Then you're all right. Oh, I mean it seriously," Johnson added. "Mr. Payne's word here is law to every one outside the family, and hers is law unto him. Well, good-by, and good luck to you." He waved his hand and passed by.

Curtis continued upon his way, wondering at the odd state of affairs. He tried to decide what sort of a woman Mrs. Payne really was, but gave up the problem as he reached the office window. A young man named Smithers was at a high desk making out the pay-roll when the doctor entered.

"Go right up-stairs to Mr. Payne's office," he suggested. "He's there, and ready to see you."

So up the stairway Malcolm went and soon found himself in Mr. Payne's presence.

The mine-operator glanced at the young man sharply over his glasses, but did not rise from the chair.

"I am Doctor Curtis, and I presume you are Mr. Payne?"

"Yes, I am. Let's see. Oh, to be sure! Doctor Curtis. How do you do?" He extended his hand. "Pray be seated." Mr. Payne stroked his white mustache and looked out of the win-

dow, rapping gently with his glasses upon the desk. Finally he said:

"Do you think you would like to practise here?"

"I think so; for a time, at least. As to remaining permanently, I couldn't decide as yet, of course."

"Of course," the other assented. "Well, you know the duties of a Company Physician are arduous. He has to be on call day and night, and must not be squeamish at the sight of blood and crushed bones. However, the practice is unequalled for a young surgeon, especially, and the pay much better than the average graduate would be likely to receive elsewhere."

Mr. Payne placed his glasses upon his nose and turned toward Malcolm, looking at him keenly.

"I am satisfied from what I hear by letter regarding your work, and I like you at first glance. Now, I can tell you in a few words what the situation is. You will have about two thousand five hundred people, all told, under your charge; perhaps more. Yes, over three thousand. I employ a thousand men and boys, and most of the men are married. We give you free of charge an office and a horse or two and a carriage. Of course we furnish instruments and medicines. Oh! by the way, what do you know of drugs?"

"I served my time in a drug-store," responded Curtis, "after leaving school and before entering college. I am qualified to compound drugs and to fill prescriptions."

Herbert Payne nodded approvingly.

"That is a matter of absolute necessity. We have no drug-store in Myrtle, and you will have all that work to do. As to the pay, you may know, perhaps. Each employe pays so much per month all the year round, whether he be well or ill. The married men pay seventy-five cents per month and the unmarried fifty cents. There is no risk about this. You have no collections to make. The paymaster deducts the sum from the wages before they are handed to the miner. I think the collections amount to about six hundred dollars per month now. You see, of course, this is a large income to start out upon. You do not have to wait year after year slowly building up a practice. It is already built for you."

"That certainly is excellent pay," said Curtis. To tell the truth, he was astonished, but he tried not to show his surprise. Mr. Payne watched him narrowly.

"Well," he concluded, "do you want to try it?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right." The mine-operator whistled

through a tube and called Smithers upstairs. When the clerk appeared, he said:

"Mr. Smithers, this is Doctor Curtis, who is going to be here with us. When Mr. Johnson comes back explain the matter. In the mean time take the doctor over to his office and help him find anything he may want. Good day, doctor. Come in and see me to-morrow."

Payne turned to his desk, and Malcolm followed the clerk downstairs. Smithers went to a drawer and took therefrom a key.

"Now we can get into the office," he observed. They went out and crossed the street, and stopped before a small frame building of one story. This was divided into two apartments. The outer, a waiting-room, held shelves containing drugs; the inner was the doctor's private office. Hardly had Curtis surveyed the rooms when a small girl, but hearty and rosy-cheeked, entered.

"Please, ma wants the doctor," she observed.

"And who is your mamma?" said Malcolm.

"She's just ma, that's all." The child looked up at the tall young physician, and chewed a corner of the plaid shawl that was fastened about her. "Dad's Patrick Burney," she finally concluded.

"Oh, is he? Well, I will go down with you.

I know your father, but I don't know where he lives."

Malcolm glanced through a small leathern case and found it supplied with the usual remedies. Then he followed the Burney child, who was already toddling up the road. She stopped before the Company house next to that one where old Mrs. McGuire had been playing the accordion the night before, and waited for the young man. When he reached the gate she walked in and, opening the door, called:

"Ma, here's the doctor."

He entered the bedchamber and prescribed for the sick woman. As he was about to leave her husband appeared.

"The top av th' marnin' to yez, docthor!" he said heartily.

"Good morning, Mr. Burney."

"We won't shake hands yit awhile, though, sorr," and the miner pointed to his wrists, face, and throat, which were coated with coal-dust. "Thake a seat, docthor, an' wait a bit for me."

He walked into the back yard and soon was busy with a piece of soap and a tin basin filled with water. As he requested, Malcolm sat down and chatted with Mrs. Burney. He was surprised at the interior of this specimen of the Company's

houses. They looked so similar and uninviting from the outside that he naturally expected wretchedness, scanty furniture, and uncleanness within. But instead there was nice rag carpet on the floor, the table and the window-frames were innocent of dust, the chairs were strong, and the bedclothes white as snow. Hardly had he time to notice this, however, when Patrick came in again, a transformed man so far as his appearance was concerned. Malcolm could scarcely suppress an exclamation of astonishment. The black coal-dust had been washed from his face, ears, hair, throat and chest, and from his hands and arms as well. The young physician saw that his hair was auburn, his skin fair, and his cheeks red.

"Ye look shurprished, docthor; but yez'll be more and more shurprished here, moind thot, now. And how be th' ould woman?"

Curtis told him that she was not seriously ill; that she seemed only fatigued, and probably would get around again as well as ever in a few days.

"Oh, docthor," she said wearily, when the young man had concluded, "shure it's not tired Oi am, but unaisy in me moind. Iver since me mon brought me here from Shenandoah Oi've

been unaisy. There's be somethin' in undher it ahll, Oi'm thinkin.' Shure, Pat," she cried appealingly, "phwat brought yez here anyway, and me an' th' childer so foine down in Shenandoah!"

"Whist, Bridget, be shtill. Oi've towld yez all along that Oi wud be afther makin' two dhollars here to ivery wan Oi made down beyant. Shure now, darlint, that ou'ter shatisphy yez! Shtip intil th' ither room, docthor, an' we'll let her go to shlape."

The two men walked into the general living-room of the family, and there Patrick said:

"Don't be afther moindin' phwat th' ould woman said, docthor; she's wake in her head, she is. Iverything is ahll roight here. Ah, don't be in a hoory," he added, as Curtis rose from the chair.

"I should like to stay, but can't now."

Patrick walked out to the gate with him.

"I suppose you're not through work for the day?" the young man said, glancing at his watch, which marked noon.

"Oi am thot, sorr. Ut's bin only three hours a day have we worruked for mony a wake—ah!-mosht six months. An' the same way ahll ovher th' coalfields. A bad time ut luks fur us, sorr."

Th' byes do be sayin' this marnin' thot to-morry th' moines will shut down ahltagither."

"Indeed! Why, what for?"

"Th' boss bees afther callin' it ovherproductuck-shin', an' we'll be oidle, Oi ixpict, fur wakes, maybe. But to-morry will be pay-day—the fursht wan fur tin wakes."

"For how long!"

"Tin wakes, sorr. Oh, don't be shurprished ut thot. Oi've seen th' toime, down in th' Shkookil raygion whin th' byes wuz paid wanst in foive months."

"Great Scott, how did they live?"

"They bought iverything at th' Company shtore, av coorse, th' shame as here. Yez kin be afther buoyin' iverything yez want to ate, an' shmoke, an' wear, ut th' Company shtore so long as ye worruk fur the Company. They putt iverthing down in th' ordher-buk whin ye buoy ut, an' take ut out av yer pay."

At supper that evening Curtis mentioned the matter to Albert Weeks.

"Yes, what Burney said is true," the tutor replied. "The men buy everything—clothing and provisions—in fact, all they have to purchase at the Company store, and their bill is settled before any wages are handed them, else they never

would pay for the goods. It's the same way with you and the priest. If the paymaster didn't retain fifty or seventy-five cents for you and twenty-five cents for the priest out of each envelope, neither of you would ever be able to collect the money."

"You don't mean to say that the Company decides how much the priest shall have out of each miner's wages!" Curtis exclaimed.

"No, certainly not; but the priest decides, and the Company 'collects' for him, as it is called."

Malcolm was silent for several minutes, then he asked:

"Is it true that the men haven't been paid for ten weeks?"

"I think it is about that long. You see the coal trade has been very dull since early in the spring; and then, as the Company is taking in no money, it pays none out, although crediting the men with what coal they mine, so they can have about what they want at the Company store."

"I should think that system of endless credit, to a poor man, would be productive of misery."

"It is," Weeks replied, as both left the table and proceeded to the veranda. "You see a miner works for two or three months steadily, and while he gets no money, perhaps, in all that time,

he knows that he does work valued at a hundred or a hundred and twenty-five dollars per month. So he buys all the tobacco and cigars he wants, and his wife and children get excellent food and clothing. Then when pay-day arrives the miner finds only a few dollars coming to him. He has used up his wages in advance. Why, I have known men to be in debt to the Company year after year, on this account."

For several minutes the tutor and the doctor smoked in silence. Then the former said:

"By the way, if I were you I would fight shy of Patrick Burney. I hear nothing but suspicions to prejudice me against the man; but he came here some three months ago from the Schuylkill region, apparently without cause, and since then seems to have been engendering an ugly feeling in the men. They appear to be getting dissatisfied and querulous, and to take a good deal of interest in strengthening their labor organization—the Miners' Union, they call it. I shouldn't wonder if he were a 'Molly'."

"A Molly McGuire!"

"Yes. There is no active branch of that lovely brotherhood here—they are principally down in the Shenandoah region, and some near Wilkes-barre, I believe. But occasionally even around

here a man is waylaid on the country road, at night, and beaten. You know the anthracite region is divided into three fields: the upper, around Wilkesbarre; the middle, here; and the lower or Schuylkill region, about Shenandoah, Mahanoy, and Pottsville."

Curtis went to bed that night feeling that a short time spent in practising at Myrtle might be of passing interest, at any rate.

CHAPTER III.

OF this fact the young physician would have been certain had he attended the meeting of the Miners' Union that evening. It was held in the schoolhouse just beyond the limits of Myrtle, and as early as seven o'clock the men began to gather. Of course Patrick Burney was there. After a residence of but three months at Mr. Payne's colliery, he had risen greatly in the estimation of the older employees, who began to regard him as a leader.

The men dropped in by twos and threes until the schoolhouse was crowded. Nearly all the Myrtle miners belonged to the union; only the driver-boys and slate-pickers were without its sacred precincts, and these unfortunates were quickly pushed out the door. Then the meeting was called to order by the chairman, Mike Boyle. He sat at the teacher's desk, and the others occupied all the benches in the room, and stood about leaning against the walls. Boyle was a heavy, brawny man of forty years. His face was

smooth, his hair black and thick, and his under jaw like that of a bulldog.

"Take ahff yer hats and shut up," he commanded, continuing: "Frinds an' brothers av th' Miners' Union, this speshial mating was cahllled to conshider whut we kin do in th' prisint emargincy. Fur months we hev been at worruk on half-toime, an' now in ahll probability the collhiery will be shut down indifinately. Oi wull cahll upon Pat Burney to shpake upon the soub-jick."

The four hundred men, who were crowded in the schoolhouse like so many herrings, had listened to Boyle's words with the greatest interest; and now they all looked at Burney as he walked from his seat to the teacher's platform, and without warning shouted:

"Byes, are yez Rooshun shlaves or free Imirykins?"

His words had a magical effect. They seemed to shock the men as would a current of electricity, and like a single individual they cried:

"We're *no* shlaves! We're Imirykins!"

"Is thot so? Well, men, whut have wee bin subjected to, wee free Imirykins? Here we shtand upon the thrishold av a long shut-down, whin we won't have a sthroke av worruk fur

months, maybe. Dhurin th' pasht six wakes we've bin at worruk on half-toime, an' fur tin wakes not a pinny av harrrd, solid cash has ony mon here seen—ixcipt a few shmall advances av a dollar or two be th' paymasther to thim as wint an' begged him fur ut. And in the mane toime, min, how hev we lived?"

Patrick paused for a moment, and a voice cried:

"At th' Comp'ny shtore, av coorse!"

"Av coorse!" Burney repeated in sneering tones. "An' whut did yez buoy there? Lishten till me, an' Oi'll tell ye. Whut yez bought wuz miner's oil at fifty cints a gallon, sold onywhere ilse but at a Comp'ny shtore fur twenty cints. Ye paid three dollahrs an' sivinty-foive cints fur powdher sold ilsewhere fur two an' a half. Yez paid thirty cints fur ateteen-cint buttther, an' twenty-foive cints fur fifteen-cint aigs, an' four dollahrs fur two-dollahr rubber boots. Yez did ahl this because yez didn't dare to buoy ilsewhere, or because ye had yer wagis hild back fur six wakes an' had no money to buy at ony ither sthore. An' ye cahll yersilves free Imirykins," he added scornfully. "Byes, thish Comp'ny business is th' dhivil himsilf! Misther Payne is more a king than is the widdy who wears a gilt chrown an' druv you an' me outen ould Oireland

achross th' wather! An' phwat Oi whants to know is, phwat be yez goin to do about it?"

Burney sat down amid a general commotion. As he had proceeded, the room became absolutely quiet, so still that during his pauses could be plainly heard the ticking of the clock. He spoke upon a subject which had engaged the thoughts of the men day after day for many weeks, ever since the colliery had been working only half-time. And as the miners heard Patrick's strong, resonant, enthusiastic tones they let their pipes go out from inattention. But now he was through, and much puffing resulted, as matches were again applied to the bowls.

The speaker had ceased but a few minutes, when an old white-haired man stepped forward. His voice was cracked, and his shoulders were bowed by the wealth of years they bore, but his words were earnest, almost appealing.

"Byes," he began, "Oi have been at worruk here iver since the Myrtle colliery wuz opened, whin mosht av yez wuz in school or in th' cradle. Oi hev bin through troubles mohre than wanst; an' Oi thell yez now, luk before yez lape! Th' gintlemin who has jist shpokin—yes, Mистер Burney, it's you Oi'm shpakin av—has been here at worruk less nor four months. Oi dunno phwat

he did in Shannydoah, where he was at worruk; but Oi *do* know," the old man concluded vehemently, "that since he has been here he has sphint his toime shtirring up ructions wid all o' yez."

As the speaker sat down there was a conflicting murmur of approval and disapproval. Before this ceased a tall, athletic man of fifty years arose.

"Misther Prisidint," he began, and the functionary addressed recognized him as having the floor:

"Misther Dominic McGarrah."

"Misther Prisidint, ut's not fur the loikes av me to be shtirrin' up stroife wid Pat Burney or ony ither mon. Az yez all knows, Oi coome here to Myrtle about the same toime as he did—only Oi coome from Wilkeshbarre, in th' ooper fields, an' he coome from the lower. But we coome here fur the same rayson, to try an' bettther oursilves. Ut wuz harrud where Oi coome from, byes; but nivir did Oi ixpict to foind in free Imeriky th' oppreshun an' chatin' an th' dhivil in gineril as Oi foind ut here in Myrtle. Phat use is it, byes, to worruk harrud an' whin pay-day coomes foind that ahll yez have lift, afther payin' th' shtore bill, an' th' rint, an' the docthor, an' th' praste, do be wan foive-dollar bill? That's phwat Oi

whant to know! Whoy shud we shlave here month in an' month out wid jist enough to kape us aloive, an' thin see the colliery shut down for th' Lord only knows how long?

"Whin there's no worruk, we arn no wagis. To be sure we kin buoy on cridit at th' Comp'ny shtore, but thin we do be in debt, so that we niver git free agin. Is *thot* Imirykin? Or is ut shlav-ery? Avin whin there do be stiddy worruk, pay-day coomes but wanst a month, or two months, or three months, bekase the Company sez that th' market do be dool, an thrade so poor. Did yez iver know th' day, byes," he shouted, "whin doof thrade kipt th' Compn'y, or the Comp'ny's wives, from spinding a wake or two at New Yorruk, or Philadelphy? Oi guessh not! Oi *guessh* not! Whin th' Compn'y whants to do onything it foinds the money—pay-day or no pay-day, loively mahrket or dool. Now, byes," Dominic concluded, in quieter tones, "Oi dohn't want yez to be afther thinkin' ut's me az wud till yez to do onything rahsh, fur Oi wuddn't; but Oi do say we hev been thrampled in undher long enough."

McGarrah took his seat, and Chairman Boyle remarked:

"Gintlemin, we have here wid us thish avenin'

an honored gist, Misther Jim McManus, editor av th' *Moiners' Herild*, an' Oi know yez wud be glad to hear him shpake a few worruds."

Boyle nodded to Editor McManus, and he stepped forward—a slender man of fifty years, with gray hair and spectacles, and a thoughtful expression. He bowed stiffly in response to a burst of applause, and said quietly:

"Gentlemen, I am glad to be here with you, for I think we are about entering upon a critical period. I came here with no intention of making a speech, but to get the news of this meeting, for I am an honorary member of the union, as you know. But I am very glad the Chairman gave me a chance to say a few words. Unless I make some mistake, there is trouble ahead. I know of the outrageous prices you have to pay at the Company store; I know you have to pay a doctor whether you want him or not; I know that some men—for all I know there may be one present now—have been in debt to the Company all their lives and have died in debt. But I do beg of you from the bottom of my heart to think before you make a step forward.

"I dare any man here to tell me that my paper has ever gone back on the men. I dare any one to assert that the *Miners' Herald* has betrayed

them. You know I am your friend, and for that reason I say: think it all over. You are no worse off than you have been for years past. Anything like a strike would be very foolish now. This is the dullest season of the year; you must know that. And it will be several months before a supply of coal will have to be mined for next winter's market. I think the Company would rather have you strike now than at any other time of the year. But I refuse to advise you either one way or the other. At any rate, you can be sure of one thing—the *Miners' Herald* will stand by you no matter what happens.”

Amid great cheering Editor McManus walked to his chair, and a short silence ensued. Then Patrick Burney arose again.

“Misther Mickmanus shpakes good worruds an’ throe, gintlemin; but Oi whant to till yez av a little occurrence thot maybe some av ye hev thried before now. About six wakes ago, whin Oi found the Comp’ny shtore charged three or four toimes more than it shud fur food and cloes, Oi wint to a shtore in Kaytown, kipt by a mon who has no dalin’s wid th’ Comp’ny, an’ who dales for cash. Oi said Oi wanted to open an account. He said ahll roight, if Oi wud give him an ordher on th’ Paymasther here not to give mesilf me

wagis until he had bin sittled wid. So Oi did so. For three wakes me ould woman got food an' cloes for less than one-half charged by the Comp'ny shtore, an' Oi fild jolly, knowin' that at th' ind av the month Oi wud be way ahead av me expinses and have money laid by in the ould sthockin'. But thish wint on fur only three wakes, whin wan day the ordher clerk from th' Comp'ny store comes up to the ould woman an' sez: 'Oi don't think yez are buoying az much at the Comp'ny shtore az yez did.' And she sez, 'No, sorr. We do bees buoyin' things chaper over at Kaytown.'

"Well, gintlemin, th' ordher clerk was sint to foind that out. He towld the shtore-kaper, who towld th' inside boss, an' that day I wuz docked a dhollar. Two days later Oi was docked agin, an' wuz put on shmall jobs, where the pay was almosht nothing. So Oi towld the ould woman to go back to th' Comp'ny shtore; an' since thin things have gone on the way they used to do."

Patrick ceased speaking for a full minute and then suddenly roared:

"Byes, that domd blagguardism do be th' worruk of thaves!"

Immediately ensued an uproar. A dozen men sprang to their feet and tried to address the meet-

ing. Others cheered and stamped their feet, and above the uproar could be heard Chairman Boyle's stentorian voice as he yelled:

"Adjourned!"

Then the lights were suddenly extinguished.

The miners filed out into the moonlit night discussing the matter, or earnestly thinking it over. Not one of them doubted the truth of Burney's experience as he had related it; many of them had undergone the same treatment.

CHAPTER IV.

MALCOLM returned to his office, one evening about a week after the meeting, in a cheerful, happy frame of mind. He had been driving in the light buggy provided for the Company Doctor, and for companionship had taken with him Albert Weeks. The tutor still remained at Myrtle. The trouble about Jack Payne had been settled. Curtis found that every few months the young instructor was compelled to hand in his resignation as a matter of self-preservation.

"If I didn't, that boy would be the death of me," Weeks said in explanation.

The Company Doctor drove directly to his office, and there found Pat Burney walking to and fro in a state of agitation.

"Ut's domd glad Oi am to see yez, docthor," he exclaimed. "Th' ould woman's purty bad aff, an wud yez be afther goin' to see her?"

"At once, Mr. Burney."

Weeks jumped out of the buggy, and at Curtis' invitation Burney took the vacant seat. The

smart, little bay horse was touched with the whip and started off at a rapid trot.

"I'm sorry to hear your wife is worse. Tell me about it."

"Well, sorr, she hed been gettin' bettther and bettther roight along after yez hed been thare, but ahl at onct thish marnin' she up an' cries: 'Oh, me hed! Me hed will burst, Pathrick dear!' Thin she put her two han's till her hed an' fill to th' flure ahl in a hape. An' ye knows yisilf, sorr, phwat a big craythure she is."

"Yes, indeed; she is large and heavy."

"So Oi kerried her in an' putt her on th' bid, an' ahl day long she's shlipt as sound as a rock on th' soide av th' mount'n. Monny's th' toime Oi thried to wake her upp, but cudn't. So at lasht Oi come for yez."

"I'm glad you did. Whoa, Billy! Here, Mr. Burney, if you tie the horse to that tree, I'll be getting out my medicines."

By the time Billy was securely tied Curtis had started toward the door, his little black kit in one hand. Patrick followed him. They entered the sickroom, and found Mrs. Burney sleeping heavily. By the bed was a young woman in a soft, gray gown, who moved aside as the Company Doctor approached. He passed his hand over

the patient's face; the skin was heated and dry. He found her pulse above normal; the respiration was slightly accelerated. He shook her by the shoulders. She made no response.

"Open the shutters wide," he commanded. "Give me all the light you can."

Patrick was standing at the foot of the bed, gazing at the doctor with a kind of fascination. He was gently patting the head of his little girl, who was silently weeping. Seeing that the husband did not move, Curtis glanced meaningly at the young woman in gray, whom he considered a friend of the family; and she quickly threw open the shutters and pulled aside the chintz curtain. Then Malcolm carefully examined Mrs. Burney's skin again. The face was flushed almost to a purple hue. The breathing was stertorous. She was evidently in a profound coma. He raised one eyelid and delicately placed a finger upon the eyeball. There was no wince or other response.

"Has this woman ever taken opium in any form?"

Patrick did not reply; and again the physician turned to the girl in gray. She came nearer and said:

"I hardly think so."

Her voice was soft and musical. Curtis for a moment wondered that the Burneys should have an intimate friend with such a refined face, such lovely gray eyes, such an exquisite forehead. Then he at once and sharply turned to his diagnosis.

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"No," she replied, and said to the big miner, "Has she ever taken any medicines, any drugs to make her sleep, Mr. Burney? Tell the doctor."

"No sorr; she never do be sick thish way befoore."

Malcolm opened his kit, but closed it immediately; the last ray of sunlight flashed upon the steel instruments.

"Please leave the room—all of you," he said. They did so, and for fifteen minutes he made a thorough examination of the patient. He knew that coma was a condition to at least a score of diseases, but only three or four were possible in this case. One by one they were rejected, and he finally decided that she was suffering a cerebral hemorrhage. Then he called in the miner and his child, and their friend.

"Mr. Burney," he said, "she is a very sick woman. You must prepare for the worst."

Patrick looked dazed, and walked out to the front step. Mechanically he lighted his little black pipe, and sat there holding his sobbing child.

"Now, doctor, what is the matter?" asked the girl in gray.

"She has suffered a stroke of apoplexy," he replied.

"Then you want ice? And hot irons?"

"Yes, as quickly as possible."

He was surprised at the intelligent understanding of Mrs. Burney's young friend, and still more at her deftness, soon after, when she appeared with the articles mentioned. The ice was placed at the base of the skull; the irons, wrapped in a blanket, at the feet of the patient. Then Curtis administered a drug whose purpose was to contract small blood vessels. He knew there was no use in so doing; the case was hopeless. Mrs. Burney had been in a coma for twelve hours and now it was profound. Still physicians try such things for what they term "a good moral effect on the family"—to make relatives and friends believe they are endeavoring to save life, even when such action is useless.

"Will she live?" asked the young girl, almost in a whisper.

"I cannot tell how long. Are you one of her relations?"

A slight blush overspread the girl's countenance.

"No," she quietly replied, "I am Miss Johnson; but all the people here are my friends."

"I beg pardon," said the young man. "Then I may as well tell you that Mrs. Burney cannot possibly recover. She may die in five minutes; she may live for a day or two."

"I think we should tell her husband," said Miss Johnson.

She walked out to the front step, and Curtis followed. Patrick looked up.

"An' do th' poor craythur be betther, sorr?" His voice was husky.

"I'm afraid not."

"Mr. Burney," Miss Johnson began, laying her soft, white hand on his brawny arm, "the doctor has done all that he possibly can. He does not think your wife will live."

"Och, me poor Bridget, darlint!"

His pipe fell to the ground. He softly stroked his child's hair. Then he said, calmly:

"Docthor, dear, isn't there *ony* think can hilp her?"

"Nothing."

"May hivin blessh yez, sorr, for doin' phwat ye have. An' God blessh you, too, Miss Hazle." He stopped and looked appealingly at the young girl. "Wud yez be afther waitin' here a little whoile, Miss Hazle"—his voice trembled, and he nodded toward his daughter—"fur little Biddy's sake, ma'am?"

"Indeed I will, Mr. Burney." She spoke in tones barely audible; a mist gathered before her eyes. She leaned forward and kissed the brow of little Biddy, who had fallen asleep in her father's arms. Then she straightened up, and Curtis doffed his hat.

"I will be back at ten o'clock," he said.

"Thank you, doctor."

He untied Billy, and stepped into the buggy and drove toward the stable. Then to the hotel he walked and sat in an unoccupied corner of the veranda. He lighted a cigar and leaned back in the chair, and noticed that it was rapidly getting dark. The sun quickly rises and sets in that mountainous country.

Malcolm's thoughts strayed from one subject to another, but every little while would they return to Patrick Burney's Company house; to the sorrowing husband, the frightened child, the dying mother, and to the girl in the soft gray gown.

In truth, all else played the part of background to Hazle Johnson. The young physician repeated the name to himself:

“‘Hazle Johnson!’ Pretty? Yes, but sounds like a name out of a book,” he mentally observed.

Nearly two hours flew by almost unnoticed. Three or four cigars had been consumed slowly, and the moon had peeped above a hill toward the East.

Malcolm was about to rise from the chair when he became aware that two men were leaning against the hedge that concealed him from view. They were talking earnestly. If he made a sudden move, they would think he had been listening.

“It’s a harrud word, ‘sthrike’ is,” one of them said.

“It is thot, me buck. But the colliery do be afther goin’ to worruk again in’ the marnin’ afther a shut-down av hardly foive days. Phwat doos thot mane?”

Curtis recognized the voice of this second speaker. He was Mike Boyle.

“Phwat doos it mane?” he repeated, continuing. “Whisht a bit, mon, an’ Oi wull till yez. Th’ Comp’ny ixpicted to shut down oontill late summher, whin they wud hev to mine coal for

th' regular winther thrade. They did shtart the shut-down, az yez know. Soodinly kim reporths av a big railroad sthrike; the roads sind worrur to sind ahl the coal possihble befoor they git tied oop. Iviry mon gits froightened. Th' manufacterers ohrder coal be th' thrain-loads. Th' demand is threminjus, and th' ohrder goes here to th' byes to wurruk day and noight av they chooshe. This, Oi say, this is th' toime av all ithers to ordher a sthrike."

Michael Boyle and his companions moved away, and Malcolm waited until they had gone out of sight. Then he quietly walked toward Burney's home, thinking of the conversation he had overheard. But once in the Company house, Boyle's words were forgotten. Patrick sat in the little parlor, surrounded by half a dozen friends, all smoking pipes. Whiskey was present, too, the odor being plainly noticeable. In the bedroom were half a dozen women hovering over the bed and talking about Mrs. Burney. Hazle Johnson and little Biddy were not to be seen.

As the Company Doctor walked into the parlor all the men took off their hats and several spoke. Patrick unsteadily preceded him toward the sick room. The husband was half in-

toxicated, and with a feeling of disgust, Curtis said:

"Never mind, I will go in alone."

He did so and all the women moved away from the bedside. The patient was unchanged apparently, but nearer Death's door.

"I can do nothing for her," he said. "Where is Miss Johnson?"

"She do be in th' kitchen wid Biddy," replied old Granny McGuire's cracked voice.

"All right, I will see her. You all wait here," he said commandingly, for a half a dozen visitors started to follow him. Then he stepped into the kitchen and shut the door back of him. Hazle was sitting in a rocking-chair, fanning little Biddy who lay asleep on a low table, her head pillowed on a folded shawl. As Malcolm entered, the former arose and stepped toward him.

"I'm very glad you came earlier than you said," she began, "because I didn't want to leave before your arrival, and I couldn't stay much longer. Have you seen Mrs. Burney?"

"Yes; there is no hope."

"Then I will go out with you, if you will allow me, Doctor Curtis. The men in the front room have been drinking, and I am afraid of drunken

men——” She ceased speaking abruptly, a little confused at the situation.

“I shall be very glad to have you do so, Miss Johnson.”

Both glanced at the sleeping child.

“Poor little thing!” Hazle exclaimed, “I hate to leave her here.”

“Yes, but probably she is better off among her own people.”

“You are right, doctor. And now I am ready to go.”

They walked from the house, up the street toward Hazle’s home. After a short silence he asked: “Did you see the pile of gaudy clothing that had been brought into the sick room during my absence?”

“Yes, Patrick piled it there on the chair. He said he wanted Bridget to look well when she was buried.”

“Where did they get that gorgeous green silk? It must have cost a hundred dollars.”

“And more,” Hazle assented. “All those things on the chair were purchased during the war or just afterward, when miners made five or six hundred dollars a month. Many a miner and his two sons made a thousand dollars a month here then.”

"Is it possible!"

"Yes, but they are poor now. They threw away the money as fast as it came to them. For example, did you see that handsome shawl on the chair? Well, I can remember when a miner's wife bought one like it at the Company store. She had purchased a great ham, and happened to see the shawl. 'How much is it?' she asked. 'Fifty dollars,' said the clerk. 'I'll take it.' Then she rolled the ham up, tucked the bundle under her new shawl, and walked out."

"Of course that extravagance would ruin any working-man."

"I should think so. You see, doctor, while they make very small wages now, yet the war is fresh in their remembrance, with its high prices, and with the enormous consuming power of the Government. So whenever the men look back to war times they get discontented and restless. Father said to-day that some of them are becoming uneasy now. He's the paymaster, you know."

"Yes, I had the pleasure of meeting him the first day I reached Myrtle."

The young people had been walking rapidly, and now reached Mr. Johnson's door.

"Won't you come in?" she asked.

"Thank you, not this evening."

"I am sure my mother would be glad to have you call."

"Not more than I," he replied, adding, "And you?"

"I too should be glad," she said simply.

"Good-night."

"Good-night, Miss Johnson."

CHAPTER V.

LATE that evening Hazle sank upon her pillows, contented and calm. But when Gertrude Payne retired her feelings were of a far different nature. She had been for a drive in her phaeton, and had enjoyed herself in a peculiar way. Instead of asking an older friend, she invited three little boys to go with her. They were children of miners, and the prospect of spinning along in a beautiful carriage, as they regarded it, was bliss. So they crowded in, and she made King Carl exert himself until he had drawn the phaeton two miles outside the village limits. Then Gertrude stopped him, and told the little boys to get out. They did so gleefully, thinking fun was ahead. And so it was, but solely for Miss Payne.

She gave King Carl a sharp cut with the whip, and in one minute had left far behind the small boys, who soon realized that their part of the game was to walk home. When the phaeton had proceeded at a rapid pace for another mile, King Carl chose his own gait, for the mine-operator's

daughter was busily revolving several matters in her head. To begin with, she congratulated herself upon Curtis' arrival. He was poor, of course, but young and handsome. Indeed he would do quite well to create a temporary diversion for her. The girl had been scarcely anywhere, except for a month or two at a time, but in Myrtle. Agreeable young men were scarce in the village, who were on terms of social equality with the Payne family. It was very lonely for Gertrude, but she only half-recognized the fact. In truth, she did not know anything different from this state of social isolation. She read trashy novels, however, and pictured herself as a thoroughly equipped society girl.

"I had about decided to make papa take me to Saratoga this summer," she murmured, "but now that Doctor Curtis has come I think I can have more fun at home. At any rate I'll have him all to myself, for there is nobody else here for him to associate with."

It was after nine o'clock when she carefully drove King Carl down the hill, past Patrick Burney's cottage. Half a block further on she whirled by Malcolm and Hazle Johnson walking together. The young physician did not notice her, but Hazle did, and enjoyed the situation.

Of course Gertrude saw them; and that is why she felt angry at bedtime.

The next morning Miss Payne arose, however, in her usual cheerful frame of mind, and after breakfast sauntered down to the stables to exercise her pony, Napoleon. The clever little animal had been her companion in childhood, and they were very well acquainted. So Gertrude had him turned into the paddock, and, with a long switch-whip in her hand, made him perform many tricks. While Napoleon was dancing, trotting, backing, rearing, rolling, and leaping, his young mistress was turning over in her mind several little plans. First of all she decided to enjoy a flirtation with Doctor Curtis, partly for the fun of it, and partly to show Hazle Johnson how powerless she was—"the poverty-stricken, upstart daughter of a colliery paymaster!" Gertrude exclaimed to herself.

But how should she begin? The best way, she thought, would be to give a dinner-party in honor of Curtis. It would be elaborate, elegant, formal; such an affair as he never had dreamed of, much less attended. She would dazzle him with the proofs of her father's wealth, and command his admiration by her own beauty. Ah, she would wear an exquisite costume! and of

course she would have Hazle there in sharp contrast—a silly, innocent little thing, in an inexpensive frock. Albert Weeks would be present, too. Gertrude would have him present, the shambling, pale tutor, for Hazle's entertainment; while she herself would be attended by Malcolm. It would be a very pretty snub to Hazle. Then Paymaster Johnson and his wife would be invited, both for the observance of what Gertrude considered the proprieties, and to show Curtis the difference between them and her parents.

With Gertrude Payne, to think was to act; frequently she acted first and thought afterward. But fortunately for her, this time thought preceded action, by a few minutes. So Napoleon was released from the performance of further tricks, and the girl hurried back to the great mansion to tell her mother of the plan. Mrs. Payne had no objections, and orders were given to the butler, and invitations were dispatched forthwith.

Weeks and Curtis received theirs at the same time. They were chatting in the Company Doctor's office.

"I suppose you'll go?" said the physician.

"I should think so! Let me give you another

hint, doctor; an invitation from her majesty is a command."

The tutor spoke so seriously that Malcolm looked at him in silence for a moment; then inquired:

"What do you mean?"

"This. That if you expect to have any peace of mind here, you must respond to Mrs. Payne's every suggestion, no matter what engagement you have to break. Your predecessor, Dr. Withers, found that out too late. She organized a card club of three or four outside the family and asked the members to call each evening for an hour after supper. In a short time Withers tired of the arrangement and pleaded one excuse and another. At the end of that month his services were dispensed with."

"Whew! That's a pretty steep way of doing things."

"But it's the method in vogue. So you see that I shall accept."

"I will follow your example."

At the dinner-party Curtis found himself seated next to the mine-operator's daughter. Her blonde hair, her sparkling blue eyes, her pink-and-white cheeks were very effective above a costume of Nile-green silk; and for fear of a pre-

ponderance of the pale-green color, she wore in her corsage a round ball of Neapolitan violets.

Ah, she was a striking figure, and she realized it when looking across the table where sat Hazle in her simply made frock of maize-colored mull. There was no attempt at magnificence on the latter's part. Jewels she had none; her only flowers were a spray of pansies placed in her dark, wavy hair. But Curtis saw beauty in her girlish figure, sweet face, and great gray eyes, in comparison with which Gertrude's was contrasted, as would be a carefully arranged bouquet of hot-house products with a spray of arbutus.

As they became comfortably settled, Gertrude said:

"I was just asking Doctor Curtis what he thought of his new practice."

Such had been her words; but she had really asked him with her eyes: "what do you think of *me*?" And Curtis, understanding her, instantly replied:

"I can't remember when the outlook appeared so attractive."

Gertrude felt the color rising to her cheeks and ears, and wondered if he thought her a fool for blushing even so slightly. He—professionally—wondered, in an almost absent-minded way, why

blood vessels in a girl's face become congested when fear or flattery is experienced. Then he continued:

"The most surprising thing to me, so far, is the willingness of men to enter a mine, day after day, never knowing whether they will be killed or maimed or burned before night."

"I don't know that mining is a more dangerous avocation than operating a train," rejoined Mr. Payne. "It certainly is much more pleasant. I venture to say that most of the older men here prefer to work underground rather than on the surface."

"For what reason? I am greatly interested."

"Well, principally because there is no snow, no freezing weather, no stormy season, and no scorching summer heat in a mine hereabouts. You see the temperature remains the same, day after day, all the year, there. No matter how the sun may be striking down upon us poor men above ground, the inside miner cannot be so affected when at work. Men sometimes get lost in snowdrifts and freeze to death along the country roads about here, but the miner does not."

"Yes," remarked the operator's wife, "and just think of the dangers of fishermen. *They* can

never tell, when leaving home in the morning, whether they will ever return. There were only two fatal accidents here last year, and nearly fifteen hundred men and boys are employed."

"I'm not a miner," spoke Paymaster Johnson, "but I would much rather take my chances at work in a breast than run the risk of being killed in the streets of New York."

"Well," laughed Gertrude, "you can keep the mines if you want them, I will choose New York. Don't you think it the divinest spot on earth?" she concluded, addressing Malcolm.

"I should hardly call it divine, but I enjoy living in the city very much."

"I shall be perfectly happy when I go there to live," she concluded, for Hazle's benefit; and the latter asked:

"When are you going?"

"When I get married."

"Oh!"

Miss Payne smiled pleasantly, but at that moment wished she were a cannibal and Hazle Johnson a missionary in her clutches. There was a far-away sound to that last little exclamation, Gertrude imagined, which meant that the Paymaster's daughter believed the wedding to be very distant indeed.

"I used to live in New York, and never feel more at home than when there," remarked Mrs. Johnson. Hers were sweet tones—her daughter's, Malcolm thought, mellowed by twenty additional years. Her eyes, too, were fine; and before it became gray, her hair had been dark.

"Did you live uptown?" Curtis asked.

"It was uptown then—facing Washington Square. Of course street cars were practically unknown, and nobody dreamed that a great hotel could succeed so far away from the heart of the city as Twenty-third Street."

"My mother's family have lived on the Square for a long time. Perhaps you knew them—the Van Brunsens?"

"The Van Brunsens! well, I should say so. Do you mean to say you are Kate Van Brunsen's boy?"

"Yes," he laughed.

"Dear, dear! we went to the same school for years."

And Gertrude, who had been mentally calling Hazle uncomplimentary names, began to anathematize Fate itself.

Hazle's surprise was only equalled by her pleasure at discovering the old friendship between her mother and Mrs. Curtis.



"We ought to have ascertained that intuitively the other evening," she said to Malcolm, "then you wouldn't have taken me for Patrick Burney's niece or cousin."

Gertrude flushed with pleasure.

"Did he really!" she exclaimed. "Did he take you for Pat's daughter?"

"Not for his daughter," said the young physician, "but before I saw Miss Johnson distinctly I supposed from her kindness to Mrs. Burney that she was a friend."

"And I am a friend to them," the girl said proudly.

"You'll get all over that idea some of these days," interposed Mrs. Payne. "It's a sad fact, but a fact none the less, that laboring people invariably abuse those who are kind to them."

Hazle wanted to reply, but, being a young woman of discretion, held her peace.

"I understand that there used to be Molly Maguires about here?" Malcolm said interrogatively, to Mr. Payne.

"Indeed there were, Doctor Curtis. I have seen the time, and not so long ago, when President Hayes himself wouldn't have dared to walk from here to Keyton alone after dark. To do so we

always made up a party of ten or a dozen, and every man of us went armed!"

"The trouble to-day is that while the Mollies probably are frightened into inaction, they still remain here for the most part, only a few having been hung," Mrs. Johnson remarked. "Now when my husband goes to the bank in Keyton before each pay-day, and comes back with thousands upon thousands of dollars, I am always afraid something will happen to him."

"Oh, I guess not," rejoined the husband in question. "You know I always have Captain Crosby with me, and he's one of the best Coal and Iron Police in the Middle Field."

"All the same, I am afraid."

"So long as the men are steadily at work," Mr. Payne observed, "there is no need for apprehension. For instance, a week ago when the collier-ies were idle, the men had time to think up plans, those so inclined, I mean. But now they are hard at work, and will be so probably for months. The demand for anthracite is very great. Railroads are pushing out everywhere, the numbers of trains on each road are being increased, and I believe the devil would find few idle hands to do his bidding, even if he came to Myrtle on purpose."

As the dinner progressed, Gertrude enjoyed herself less than she had anticipated. She had planned on making Malcolm devote himself to her in order to show Hazle that she could do as she chose with the new arrival. But while Curtis was interested in her, he displayed just as much interest, and no more, in what was being said by the others. Gertrude was magnificent in her striking costume, but somehow Hazle did not look so shabby as she had expected. To tell the truth, Gertrude found her remarkably pretty in that maize-colored gown, and she was glad when, at last, the dinner drew to an end. As they were leaving the room she managed skillfully to detain Curtis for a moment.

"I see you have no flower in your buttonhole," she said. "Let me pin this rose there."

He leaned forward, and in a moment she had carried out her wish.

They were moving on when a servant appeared, and, glancing with evident trepidation at Miss Payne, said:

"Doctor Curtis is wanted at once. There's a man hurt by a fall of coal."

"I will come immediately," said the physician, starting to his feet.

"Oh, don't go, Doctor Curtis," said Gertrude.

"I don't believe the man is hurt much. These miners can stand almost anything."

"It is impossible to stay, much as I would like to, Miss Payne."

He explained the situation to the others and started for the door.

CHAPTER VI.

IN the corridor by the reception-room a servant met him with his hat and topcoat, and assisted him to enter a light wagon, which was waiting at the foot of the steps below the veranda. The vehicle belonged to the Company store, and in it were a couple of miners.

While the horse was urged rapidly toward the lodge gates one of the miners said apologetically:

"We worr sohrry to throuble yez, Docthor, whoile ye worr at th' boss', but Pat Burney towld us to come. He said, sorr, as how yez worr a mon yersilf, an' wouldn't shtay away whin a poor little dhriver-boy worr hurted."

"Indeed I am not such a brute! Where is the lad and how is he injured?"

"Little Tommy Gorman, he do be, sorr, an' his roight lig worr crooshed in under a caher."

"I must go to my office first, then."

They had left Mr. Payne's grounds and went whirling around to the little frame structure Curtis used as an office. He jumped from the wagon, hastily procured his kit of instruments

and leaped again to the seat. And off they rushed toward a distant part of the village.

Malcolm did not know anything about the Gorman family, but he pitied them the moment he saw the miserable little house they lived in. Three or four men hung about the door, and a lamp inside showed the presence of as many women. As the wagon dashed up all made way for the physician, who found, lying upon a rude bunk in one small room, a lad of perhaps fifteen years. His clothing and face were black with coal-dirt, and his head rolled from side to side as he groaned with pain. A candle and a single lamp shed all the light in the room, and dim it was.

"Some of you people go and get three or four more lamps, and hurry!" the Company doctor commanded. His glance lighted upon Pat Burney and he said gladly: "Mr. Burney, clear off the kitchen table in the other room and bring it in. Yes, place it in the middle here. Now, all you other people go out."

There was much noise and confusion. The women were talking and trying to comfort Tommy's mother, but she paced the floor wringing her hands and crying aloud.

"Och, me poor bye hurted! Me mon kilt lasht

year, an' Tommy kilt now! Och, it's a harrud thing——"

"Put them all out, Burney. Yes, Mrs. Gorman must go, too. Ah, here are the lamps."

The lights were placed in convenient spots. In another minute Patrick and Curtis were alone with the patient, and the door was fastened so none could enter.

"Now, Burney, help me lift him upon the table."

They took hold of the injured lad, but he screamed and sobbed so that Burney loosened his grasp.

"Don't let go again," Malcolm said firmly, "we have got to lift him upon that table. Now——"

"Och, dochter! Don't! Och, dear dochter, be aisy. Och! *Och!*" Tommy screamed. And Curtis said between his teeth:

"Now, Gorman, try to bear it, we've got to get you there. So!"

At last the boy lay on the smooth, white surface. His chest rose and fell rapidly: the breath escaped stertorously; with every exhalation was uttered a moan.

"Where does it hurt most?" asked Curtis, feeling of the knee. "Here?"

"Yis, sorr! Och, dochter——"

"Or here?" the surgeon continued placing his hand above the spot mentioned. Tommy did not answer. He merely groaned and moaned and sobbed. Curtis listened to the action of his heart, and quickly took from his kit a sponge, and a paper cone, and a vial of pungent liquid. The sponge was saturated and placed in the cone. After showing Pat how to hold it so the patient would be properly etherized, the surgeon took off his topcoat and dresscoat and turned back his shirt sleeves. Then cleansing sponges, and compress, and knife, and saw came into play. Carefully he worked, but rapidly, until the amputation was finished.

Before he left the house he picked up Gertrude's rose from the operating table, where it had fallen; one of the white petals was stained with an irregular blotch of crimson. Then he tossed the blossom into the street.

CHAPTER VII.

CURTIS went to the Widow Gorman's little home at an early hour the next day, but he was too late. Tommy had died at sunrise. As the Company doctor walked away he met a horse and a buggy, in which was a slender, gray-haired man wearing spectacles.

"Good morning," said the latter, pulling up his horse. "You are Doctor Curtis? Ah, I thought so. I am the editor of the *Keytown Miners' Herald*, and I came over to see how the boy is."

"He died at daybreak."

"Indeed! Let's see." Editor McManus produced a stubby pencil and a scrap of manila paper. "His name was Gorman, wasn't it?"

"Yes, Tommy Gorman. I should say he was about fifteen years old."

"How, when, and where was he hurt?"

"That I don't know. He was working down Number Six slope."

"I think I'll drive over there and get the particulars. Don't you want to go along?"

"Thanks, yes."

Malcolm stepped into the buggy, and Jim McManus chirruped to his horse.

"Do you know, doctor, whether the lad was brought home in the ambulance?"

"I didn't hear. The fact is, I have never seen it. There has been no ambulance case so far; but then, you know, I only came here recently."

"Then you have something to see: and I don't wonder he died." Jim spoke emphatically. "We will stop at the stables just this side of Number Six until you get a look at the death-wagon. I term it that, for it's liable to kill any poor devil who has to ride in it."

The buggy turned a corner, and the editor added: "Those low buildings are the stable, and that monstrosity by the side of the road is the ambulance. I see they haven't taken it in yet, so it was used. Well, what do you think of it?" he concluded as they reached the vehicle.

Curtis did not make immediate reply. He earnestly looked at the ambulance in silence. It was nothing but an ordinary wagon, such as is used on farms for heavy hauling, except that a flimsy cover had been arched over it. Springs it had none, nor stretcher; not even a mattress. A couple of horse blankets spread upon the floor

was all an injured person had to lie upon. It was muddy, rough, uncouth.

"Is that the ambulance?" said Curtis, with something like horror in his tones.

"Yes. Ah, Doctor, you would be amazed to see it, as I often have, jolting over these stony mountain roads, bearing one, or two, or even three poor fellows all mangled and bruised and bleeding."

"I should think a ride in that wagon would kill almost any one—the shock, I mean—who was badly hurt."

"It kills many a one. If a miner is very badly hurt, in half the cases he dies before he gets to his home. The shock kills, as you suggested."

They drove on toward Number Six, and learned that Tommy Gorman had been a door-boy. His business was to keep closed the big wooden doors so that the artificial currents of air in the mine would not be changed. In trying to close them the night previous he slipped, and the oncoming truck knocked him down and crushed his leg.

Editor McManus carefully noted all the particulars, and turned the buggy around.

"When you are in Keytown," he said to Malcolm, "come into the *Miners' Herald* office. If

"I am there I shall be glad to see you. If not, just make yourself at home."

"Thank you very much. I have not been to Keytown yet, but I'll be glad to go."

Four days later he started to accept the invitation, but changed his mind, and decided to call upon Paymaster Johnson at the Company offices. So he wended his way thither and saw a hundred men, women, and children in front of the building. The majority were formed in line reaching to a small window, but a score or more stood in groups here and there. From one of these groups Patrick Burney stepped and approached the Company doctor.

"Good-day," said Malcolm. "What is going on?"

"Th' Comp'ny's payin' ahff, sorr, fur the firrst toime in three months, ahll but wan wake."

"I'm glad to hear it; I suppose the men will have considerable ready money now. It seems hard for them to live on credit so long."

"Doos ut be monny ye tahk av? Wull, now, Docthor, shure Oi supposhed yez ud been here lang enough to know betther nor *thot*. Here do be joost whut *Oi* hev to show fur ilivin wakes av worruk."

Patrick pulled a five-dollar bill and a two-dollar

bill from his pocket and held them by the corners so they might flutter before Malcolm's eyes.

"Is that all?"

"Iviry cint. But coome along o' me an' see how the byes do be paid ahff, whoile yez be here, Docthor."

Curtis instinctively felt that Burney had some ulterior motive in desiring him to go nearer the Paymaster's window, but he went notwithstanding. Through the little aperture he could see Mr. Johnson and an assistant. As a miner approached, the clerk thrust a receipt through the window, which the man signed without having time to read it. Then he received his pay in an envelope. At least Curtis expected that the envelope would be passed to the miner. In reality it was laid on a little shelf just outside the window. The next instant a tall, brawny man, dressed in clerical garb, seized it, tore it open, selected a sum therefrom and handed the remainder to him who had earned it, by the sweat of his brow, in those dangerous caverns underground. As Curtis saw the first man paid thus his blood boiled, and he exclaimed:

"Who is that opening the envelopes?"

"Thot is his rivrence, Father O'Rourke. He used to hev th' Company 'collect' twinty-foive

cints a month from aich mon; but that didn't pay th' ixpenses av th' choorch, so now he takes as mooch as he nades, sorr."

Malcolm now understood why Burney wanted him to see the miners paid. He felt Patrick looking at him sidewise from his right eye, the left one having been blown out in an explosion.

There the priest stood, opening one envelope after another, counting the money, and retaining some from each. But after a dozen had been treated thus Curtis observed Mike Boyle approach. Mike had only one arm, but he was quick enough to grasp the envelope before Father O'Rourke, and the latter glaring at him, commanded:

"Give ut to me."

"Oi wull *not*, ye' Rivirince."

The next instant the priest's great stick crashed upon Mike's wrist, and with a cry of pain he was forced to let the envelope drop. Before he could reach it again Father O'Rourke tore it open, took out all the bills but one, and handed that to Boyle while his eyes flamed with anger, while purple cords stood out on his throat and temples. Mike did not reply. He had intended to, but Captain Crosby, of the Coal and Iron Police, grasped his shoulder and forcibly pushed him into the road.

"You go home," said Crosby, "or I'll break your head and lock you up afterward."

And Mike went his way.

For half an hour the Company doctor stood there watching the scenes, and just as he was about to leave one occurred which he remembered.

A frail little woman reached the window to draw the pay of her husband (who was suffering from a contusion of the head), but did not attempt to take the envelope until the priest had first opened it. He pulled out the money, placed some in his pocket and handed her the remainder. As the woman saw how little this was she choked back a sob and fell to her knees, praying:

"Oh, Father, plaze give me a little more, joost this wanst: my mon got hoorted foive wakes ago, and th' childer's sick. Plaze, Father——"

Tears were streaming down her face as she stretched forth her hands in imploring gesture. But O'Rourke paid no attention to her. He did not even look at her. He seized the next envelope, and she, realizing that appeal was useless, slowly walked away, sobbing and moaning but holding tightly the little sum she now possessed.

There is no need to describe Malcolm's astonishment, amazement, indignation. If he had read of such an occurrence in a book he would

not have believed it. But he saw it, and it actually occurred. As to that fact there is no question. He knew very well that it would be difficult to find other priests who would literally steal money thus. He realized that this was a remarkable example of priesthood: that Father O'Rourke would be severely dealt with should his bishop learn the truth. And yet all these facts served only to show the young physician how dangerous power can be made in the hands of an unscrupulous man, who lives in a remote region.

He learned, later on, that Herbert Payne kept Father O'Rourke supplied with sherry, burgundy, champagne, and cigars from one year to another. In the Company's books these items figured under the head "incidental expenses;" but the great operator knew that the priest's good-will was as necessary for successful mining as were the cars which transported his coal to tidewater.

CHAPTER VIII.

MISS PAYNE smiled with genuine pleasure as she entered the reception room that evening with outstretched hand.

"I'm very glad to see you, doctor. It's been a long time since you were here—the time you were called away to attend Tommy Gorman, I mean."

"I think it is within the prescribed week," laughed Curtis, "but so many things have happened that it does seem longer."

He was thinking of the scenes witnessed that afternoon when the men were paid off. To him they were a remembrance of the Dark Ages rather than of the year of our Lord, 1877.

"I'm glad the time passes pleasantly for you," Gertrude rejoined. "I have so little to do that the days just drag by."

"I suppose it is rather quiet here."

"Yes, indeed; but then I love to ride and drive, and our cook is good-natured, so I can be in the kitchen a while each day. I do love the practical side of life."

Curtis was astonished, but looked merely interested.

Gertrude had caught her idea last expressed from an article in *The Youth's Companion*, and thought it sounded well. She neglected to state definitely that her work in the kitchen consisted of making candy, and attempting puddings which invariably turned into cake.

She was silent for a moment, and then added:

"I think all girls ought to understand the cares of housekeeping. I suppose you have sisters?"

"One, but I'm afraid she has little time for the kitchen."

"Poor thing!" Gertrude mentally exclaimed. She thought Miss Curtis was probably a shop-girl working twelve hours a day, or a governess, or a companion to some wealthy woman. Then the operator's daughter remarked, interrogatively:

"Our cook is very good—doesn't make me feel as if I was in her way all the time."

"That's nice."

"Yes, indeed."

She jumped to the conclusion that Miss Curtis' cook was a great, ignorant, raw-boned girl who did "general housework." Curtis tried to imagine the consternation of his mother's *chef* should his sister Elizabeth invade those unknown re-

gions, located somewhere in the rear of the mansion, just west of Fifth Avenue, where they lived.

Gertrude noticed that the conversation flagged and suddenly asked:

"Do you like to look at photographs?"

Without pausing for reply she produced a large album from the interior of a curiously fashioned window-seat.

"Here is papa when a boy," she began, pointing to a crude daguerrotype of a small, chubby youth in kilt skirts. "This is mamma when she was married. Over here is Uncle John and Aunt Mary and the baby."

Malcolm tried to appear enveloped in a cloud of interest, and followed her words closely.

"Now, would you ever think that could be Cousin Jim!" she exclaimed, turning a page and quickly adding: "Of course you wouldn't know, for you never saw him."

She turned another page, and paused with simulated hesitancy before the likeness of a smooth-faced young man, of possibly twenty years. He wore a checked coat and a scarf, in which was a pin much too large for good taste. His long hair was plastered over a narrow forehead, evidently with some oleaginous preparation. Curtis saw that she expected a question.

"And who is this one?" he asked.

Gertrude laughed in shrill tones.

"Oh, he—he's one of the brotherly kind!"

"Indeed."

"Yes, poor fellow," she sighed. "Awfully nice too, but not of our station. He was a struggling Methodist preacher. I fought all I could for months against it, but like others he came to the point at last. He has a big church in Chicago, now."

She neglected to add that he also had a wife and two children.

Another she showed him, of a thin, weary-faced woman, with corkscrew curls about her temples.

"I call her 'Aunt Sarah,' " she explained, "but she really was no relation whatever. She used to be a sort of companion to mamma, and later a kind of nurse to me. Poor Aunt Sarah," the girl mused, half to herself; "she believed that stories in all the novels were true—seemed to think they were histories. She always got Paul and Virginia mixed up with Paris and Helen of Troy. Then you couldn't convince her but that there was a real Pickwick who travelled about with his other friends, Snodgrass and Sam Weller. I just dote on Weller, don't you?"

"Ha—yes, oh, yes!" Curtis exclaimed groping for a mental foothold, and barely alighting on the edge. Then a happy inspiration burst upon him. He glanced at his watch:

"You must pardon me for looking at the hour, Miss Payne, you know a physician has no time to himself except a few brief periods now and then." He arose from the seat and so did she, saying:

"Must you go?"

"Yes," he replied. She proffered her hand and he took it. The girl did not withdraw hers for several moments, and he felt a slight pressure of her fingers. In a glance he saw her blue eyes and pink cheeks, her wealth of golden hair, her rounded, full throat, her girlish, graceful figure. But though her eyes sparkled with vitality, in them the goddess of intelligence did not dwell.

"What a magnificent human animal!" he mentally exclaimed; then said aloud, "Good night, Miss Payne."

"Good night, Doctor Curtis. Do come soon again."

"Thank you, I will. Please give my regards to your mother."

The moon had risen and was bathing in the great, endless sky, flooding it and the earth far below—the roads and fields and woods and houses

—with golden waves of light. Pale clouds drifted past, as foam idly drifts when it has reached calm water. There was stirring a gentle breeze; just enough to make the leaves murmur, and it was early, not yet nine o'clock. Malcolm could not bear the thought of going back to his office to study, or, worse yet, to waste such an evening in thoughtless gossip with the group of men who habitually haunted the hotel from supper until bedtime. He would walk, whither he knew not, nor cared. He halted at the lodge gates to decide. There, upon the pathway beyond, by the roadside, he saw the imprint of a woman's shoe pointing to the right toward a group of Company houses that clustered by themselves at the foot of a gentle slope. He, also, would walk thither, not to stop at one of the houses, of course, but to go beyond into the woods, to a high rock that marked the brink of a ravine, below which a valley swept out in magnificent proportions.

On he walked, past the houses, and into the woods. There was little underbrush excepting tufts of huckleberry-bushes. The pine-trees stood silent—tall, black columns canopied each with green. Now and then through a break in the foliage the moon poured a stream from her golden heart. Suddenly, without warning, a bush

rustled, and Malcolm paused to hear the flutter of a partridge whose rest he had disturbed. Then on he went, slowly, quietly, and found himself at the foot of the great boulder, which gradually rose by a series of uneven steps. He glanced above, and there on the summit were two women. He turned to retrace his steps, but was stopped by one of them..

"Don't go, Doctor Curtis," she said; "rather come up here, won't you?"

It was Mrs. Johnson's voice, and Hazle's added:

"Yes, do come."

They were sitting at the base of a huge tree, and he joined them in drinking the glories of the scene that lay beyond; the deep, black, bottomless ravine; here and there a jutting rock thrown into light by a moonbeam's kiss; further, the tops of tall trees only less dusky than the shadows they cast; then a golden flood on the meadows; the limpid stream winding in and out, discernible only for the silvery strokes upon its surface; and then more fields and straggling rows of trees growing less distinct and less, until the army of which they were the pickets melted into the boundless night.

"We often come here," said Hazle, without taking her eyes from the beautiful scene. "I

love to sit in this spot and look far, far away. If one were sad and discouraged this would soothe and comfort him, don't you think so?"

Through her great gray eyes shone her soul, innocent and pure.

"Yes," he replied aloud, and his heart added, "if you were here."

It might have been his look, or her heart might have heard his beat those four unspoken words; a strange, faint, delicate thrill caused the young girl's head to turn away, and her skin to become flushed. And the young man looked longingly at her, and of a sudden he noticed for the first time how beautiful she was. For an instant their souls met, and the spark was struck.

After he bid them good-night at their home, an hour later, Curtis walked in a direction away from the hotel, but he scarcely realized it. He was thinking of Hazle, and how strange it was that he had never noticed those great, soft eyes; that wavy, dark hair; those sweet lips that could not speak an untruth, and her girlish, slender form. Again and again he thought of them, and at last found himself half a mile from Myrtle. Then he retracted his steps, laughing at his fancies.

"Nonsense, old man!" he exclaimed mentally.

"Of course you're not falling in love with her. Why, you haven't talked to her a dozen times, all told. Besides"—and his ears became hot as the thought suggested itself—"you've imagined yourself in love a dozen times before. Now, don't be foolish."

CHAPTER IX.

"WELL, upon my word, I never heard of such a thing!"

Mrs. Payne was speaking, and to her husband. She certainly looked surprised. She helplessly sank into a chair, while he continued to stand on the veranda steps and smoke.

"The idea of you giving a banquet to the men!" cried his wife, her black eyes snapping angrily. "Herbert," she concluded, "I'm ashamed of you."

"It can't be helped, my dear. The threatened railroad strike has made manufacturers and sales-agents all over the country panicky. They are swamping us with orders, fearing that the railroad tie-up will prevent shipments for months to come. And now our men, the miners, have seized the opportunity. Scott tells me he thinks they are about ready to strike also."

"Scott! A nice superintendent William Scott is. Why don't you get a superintendent who can keep the men in order?"

Mr. Payne didn't reply. He walked into his

study and left his better seven-eighths to her own reflections.

The banquet, a great success, was held the next evening in the hotel dining-room. It was given ostensibly to the Myrtle Fire Department; but as that body included all the officers of the miners' local union, Mr. Payne's object was secured. Fully fifty sat down at the table, Superintendent Scott at the foot, and the great operator (much against his will), at the head. After an hour had been spent in eating and drinking, Scott looked meaningly at his employer, who fidgeted in his chair for a moment, and then arose amid much applause. He cleared his throat, affixed his gold-rimmed glasses more firmly, and said:

"Gentlemen of the Myrtle Volunteer Hose Company, it gives me great pleasure to be with you to-night [here Mr. Payne mentally offered a prayer for forgiveness] and to testify to my appreciation of your skill, and bravery, and honor in fighting the flames and protecting property. Although there has been no recent fire to suggest this little entertainment, yet I felt that it would not be amiss, for vigilantly do you watch lest conflagration occur, and ready are you always to respond to the call of duty."

Mr. Payne paused and fumbled in a pocket.

Several of the men present started to applaud, but Superintendent Smith told them, in whispered tones, to "shut up," so they stopped. Then the operator spoke again:

"In view of these circumstances," he said, unfolding two slips of paper, "I have decided to present to the Myrtle Volunteer Fire Company a check for five hundred dollars, and to the members of the Myrtle Silver Cornet Band, all of whom I see here to-night, a check for two hundred dollars."

Mr. Payne placed the checks on the table and reached for his hat.

"Pray, do not think me rude in leaving so abruptly, but I have an engagement."

He bowed, and smiled, and started for the door. Not until he reached it did any of the men say a word. They looked helplessly at him and at each other in blank amazement. Such a thing as gifts from Mr. Payne, amounting to seven hundred dollars—it was beyond belief. But there were the checks; and there he was at the door. Like one man the fifty arose, stamping, cheering, and clapping their hands. Mr. Payne paused, bowed, smiled, and disappeared. Then Patrick Burney calmly put the checks in his pocket and said:

"Th' maytin's adjourned. We'll cahll a speshul wan av th' Eckzecutiv Committhee ter-morrer, an' pash risilutions av thanks for Misther Payne."

"This maytin' doon't adjourn until youse toorn over that two-hundred dhollar chick to me, Patsy Burney! Oi'm th' directhor av th' Myrtle Silver Cornhet Band, if youse remimber."

Terence Flannagan's tones were significant, and Pat hurriedly rejoined:

"Certainly, to be shure. Here, Misther Flannagin, tahke th' bit av pahper."

Leader Flannagan put the check in his pocket, and told his musicians to follow him into the band-room next door. They did so, and the other banqueters went their several ways.

Flannagan at once called his men to order, and asked what disposition should be made of Mr. Payne's gift. Tim Rafferty, who played the fife, wanted to buy new uniforms. Hughie McCaffery, manipulator of the cymbals, was in favor of giving half the sum toward a new church organ, and the remainder for the cause of Home Rule in Ireland. When several more had spoken, Leader Flannagan said:

"Ut's grate *shimpathy* Oi have wid schames fer new unifahrms, loikewise Home Rool. But pwhat th' Myrtle Sihlvir Cornit Bahnd nades

joost now, espeshuly fer sirrynades, is a kalkium loight; an' Oi fer wan am in fahvor av shpindin' az mooch az nade be av th' two hundhred dholars fer a kalkium loight."

Then he sat down, and old Dominic McIntyre stood up. He was short and fat and gray-haired. He played the sliding trombone, and talked in a squeaky, thin voice, that reminded strangers of a Punch and Judy show.

"Ut's not sooch as me, gintlemin," he began, "az wud inquoire intil th' siggistion av' our directhor, Misther Flannagan. But befoor mahkin oop our moinds, Oi wud loike to know if any mimber av th' Myrtle Sihlvir Corhnet Band kin ploy on a kalkium loight?"

Patrick Burney left the banquet in company with Dominic McGarrah, and Mike Boyle, who was chairman of the miners' local union. They walked for some distance in silence, and finally Patrick said:

"Ut wuz a nate thrick th' ould mon thried."

"Ut wuz," McGarrah responded. Then turning to Boyle, he continued: "Wull ut be setthled to-noight?"

"Ut wull thot. Ut do be setthled ahlridy."

He sat down by the roadside and lighted his

pipe, and Burney and McGarrah did likewise. After a short silence Chairman Boyle said:

"Be aight o'clock in th' marnin, iviry mon an' bhoy worrukin' fer Herbeht Payne an' Compahny here goes out on shtrike. Iviry divishun infarmed me this avenin' thot they wud do so. Thar wull be shympathy stroikes at Payne's two ither cohlleries termorrer afthernoon onless he gives in."

"Gud worruk!" Burney exclaimed approvingly. And McGarrah said:

"Whin wull we, th' exzecootive committhee av th' miners' union, cahll on Misther Payne?"

"Say tin in th' marnin'."

"We'll mate ut my house?" Barney suggested.

"We wull."

Herbert Payne went home from the banquet in a very cheerful frame of mind. Superintendent Scott had advised against entertaining the men and giving them presents. It would do no good, he argued; rather would it let them understand how anxious the operator was to avoid trouble. But Mr. Payne said he knew better. He gave the banquet, making the mistake that causes ninety per cent of all labor disturbances, that of underestimating the intelligence of work-

ingmen. They knew that he was trying to conciliate them; that he feared disturbance, and was anxious to ward it off. Not one of them would have been foolish enough to show his hand as Mr. Payne had done were their places exchanged.

The operator was breakfasting the following morning, when a messenger from Superintendent Scott brought word that the men had gone out on strike.

"Evidently your banquet last night did not suit their taste," said Mrs. Payne.

Her husband did not reply. He knew from experience what would be the result. He swallowed his coffee and hurriedly drove to his office. There he was closeted for nearly two hours with Scott and Paymaster Johnson. They carefully went over the ground, and found that they had orders sufficient to run the colliery night and day for weeks. It was the busiest season of the entire year, principally because of the threatened railroad strike. As they finished a review of the situation, Mr. Payne said to his superintendent:

"Well, what do the men want, anyhow? What are they striking for?"

"On account of the new receipt."

"They can stay out on strike, then, until the youngest of them dies of old age," said Payne

bitterly. "I never will give in on that receipt. It has been my plan for years; and now when I finally try it, the market, which ought to be dull as a hoe, jumps into activity. I expected the men would object, but I had not expected any such pile of orders as that, a month after the receipt was introduced."

And he pointed to a file heavily laden with requests for coal.

"How many times has the executive committee of the union called upon you?" asked Scott.

"Three times. They wanted the old receipt renewed, of course. The last time they came—ten days ago—I didn't care whether they struck or not for a couple of weeks, and told 'em so. When you get a snarling dog, the only thing is to thrash him. And I gave them seven hundred dollars only last evening!"

Superintendent Scott and Paymaster Johnson discreetly held their peace. They knew that his income was nearer ten hundred than seven hundred dollars per day, and that the gift wouldn't cause him to suffer.

The three were still discussing various phases of the strike when a clerk announced Burney and Boyle and McGarrah.

"Show them up," said Payne.

The three delegates entered, evidently without fear. Boyle stepped forward and said, in calm, earnest tones:

"Misther Payne, we are here, ripresenting the union, to foind out if youse do be reahdy to sthop th' stroike. Ut wull be aisy now, but-harrud worruk later."

Payne knew better than to quibble with these men. He realized their temper, and that of their fellows. He smiled, and said kindly:

"I am glad to see you gentlemen; take seats. Now I understand what you are here for. You fear there will be a long shut-down, and that the men will be thrown out of work for weeks. As you say, we can speedily arrange this difficulty. I give you my word that the colliery has orders which will keep it running night and day, if necessary, for three months. Go back to the boys and tell them that, and see that they go to work at once." He pulled out his watch. "It is now eleven o'clock. All the men who are in their places ready for work by three this afternoon can keep on. I will discharge every one of them who stays out after that hour."

When the operator had ceased speaking he looked, with an innocent, frank expression, at the delegates. One of Patrick Burney's eyes was

blind, but the other shot forth sparks of indignation.

"Oi guesst youse misundhersthand th' matther, sorr. The Myrtle Lodge av th' Miners' Union will keep your cohlliery shutt down fer twinty yeers, intil youse agrees to give up the new recait. Thot's whut we do be here for."

"The new receipt!" exclaimed Payne, as if the idea had never occurred to him before. "Why, what is the matter with it?"

"Oi'll tell yuse." Burney's rawboned form trembled with indignation. "Thare is no silf-rispecting mon on earth thot wud soign it. Thot recait—accohrdin to ut's very worruds—conveys to Hehrbert Payne and Compahny th' power av attoorney from th' mon thot soigns ut. Thot do be th' rayson youse kin kape back parrt av' me waiges fur th' Comp'ny house, an' th' Comp'ny docthor, an' th' Comp'ny praste, whither or no Oi wud loike yez to. An' so long as Oi soign that recait an' give youse th' power av attoorney, Oi can niver sue yez for ut. Yez can see, sorr, that Oi have conshulted wid a laryer. An' our oltimatioom do be this: We wull give yez joost tin minoots for a reply. If yez refuse, th' Myrtle Colliery will be shoot down foriver."

Burney held his watch in his hand. Mr.

Payne lighted a cigar and opened a newspaper. Scott and Johnson sat silent, as did Boyle and McGarrah. The allotted period seemed much longer than it really was, but at last Burney closed his watch with a snap.

"Toime's oop," he observed briefly. "Whut hev yez to say?"

"I say you can all go to the devil!"

Mr. Payne did not glance from his paper until the three delegates had gone downstairs and out of the office to the road.

Then he whirled around in his chair and snarled at Johnson.

"Well, why don't you suggest something? What are you sitting there for like a graven image?"

"There is nothing to say. The men are out and will stay out. We will have hard work to get others to take their places."

"Well, make out black-lists and send them around at once. Shut off the store accounts also. Tell the Company storekeeper to sell nothing until further notice except for cash. Send for Captain Crosby immediately."

Scott went down stairs to look for the Coal and Iron policeman, and Mr. Payne paced the floor, rapidly reviewing the affair. Although undis-

turbed before the delegates, he was all action now. His eyes sparkled; his nostrils dilated and contracted. He had a struggle to face and he knew it. One thing, however, he was absolutely determined upon: never would he relinquish that new form of receipt. After years of mining he had grown tired of petty disputes with his men almost every week, and had devised the odious paper. No one realized more than he that it gave to him complete power of attorney; that after signing it none of the miners could bring suit for wages against him. He would preserve that form of receipt at all hazards. It placed the men as completely in his power as if they were his slaves for the time being. Most of them had overdrawn their accounts at the Company store. Few, he believed, had ready money of any considerable amount. By shutting down on the credit sales he would weaken them, and then the black-list would prevent them from working elsewhere. No other operator would give employment to a man after he had received the secret news that the miner had been black-listed at a colliery. These were some of the means Mr. Payne would use to crush the strikers.

At this point Scott reëntered the private office, bringing with him Captain Crosby—a broad-

shouldered, muscular man of middle age, with heavy white hair and mustache, aquiline nose, firm chin, and piercing blue eyes.

"You sent for me, Mr. Payne?" he inquired.

"Yes. Are there indications of any trouble?"

"Well," replied Crosby, helping himself to a chair, "it is too early yet to determine. Of course the men are angry, but none have begun drinking yet."

"It is not so bad as if all three collieries were shut down," Payne mused. "By working day and night at the other two, we can get out a great deal of coal."

"Let's see, sir. Myrtle is out, of course, and I understand that Sandy Hill goes out this afternoon. That will leave only one working—the Upper Mines; and that may be shut down, too at any minute."

"Do you need any help in your police work?"

"Not now; but I may need it without warning."

Mr. Payne was a man of action. He carefully locked his office door, and the four held a brief but earnest consultation in low tones. Before dusk the pale tutor, Albert Weeks, was on a train bound for New York.

CHAPTER X.

The next few days were anxious ones for the leaders of the union. Permanent headquarters were arranged in a large barn, and there the men gathered morning and afternoon and night. As Chairman Boyle had predicted, the Sandy Run colliery shut down the first day of the strike; but the men at the Upper Mines steadfastly refused to go out. So long as they would work Mr. Payne could sell his coal, for he operated all three of the collieries. Delegation after delegation had visited the Upper Mines but to be repulsed; and to make matters worse, some of the striking miners had applied for work elsewhere only to find that they were blacklisted.

Things were looking serious. On the fifth day of the strike an all-day meeting was held at headquarters. Boyle and Burney and McGarrah had a thousand matters to attend to, and unfortunately there was no strong, steady hand to hold the men in check. Many of the latter were drinking; and the enforced idleness, coupled with great anxiety, placed their nerves under a

severe strain. Speech after speech was made, angry at first, then violent, then inflammatory. The barn was jammed, and hundreds of men and women were packed outside about the doors. After supper they gathered again, and the sun went down while passions grew fiercer. Two hours passed, and the moon looked upon the great, black mass of humanity struggling to get inside the barn, where a fiery young miner was calling upon his fellows to demand their rights. As he cursed the men of the Upper Mines, and besought his hearers to compel them also to strike, roars of applause went up from the wildly excited mob, which was fast losing its senses. Suddenly the speaker brought his words to a close with a suggestion which amounted to a command. A mad, hoarse cheer greeted it, and like a herd of stampeded cattle the thousand rushed from the barn to their homes, only to gather again immediately.

It was at about this time that Malcolm Curtis and Hazle Johnson started toward her father's house, after having been to walk for a short distance. They had reached the cross-roads near the entrance to the village when they heard a low, deep rumble. Hazle stopped in the middle of a sentence and listened.

"Can it be thunder in this glorious moonlight?" she asked.

"I don't think so," said Curtis. "Let's hurry to the top of the hill."

They quickened their pace, but the rumble grew louder and louder, changing into a roar. Now and then screams shot out into the air as would lighting bolts from black clouds. The Company Doctor seized Hazle's arm and ran with her across the road toward a large apple-tree that stood on ground several yards above the highway.

"There's no time to lose!" he said. "It's a mob of strikers. Quick!"

He leaped into the air, grasped the lowest limb and drew himself into the tree. Then securing a firm brace with his knees, he reached down and clasped Hazle's upraised wrists. The next second she was hoisted from the ground and swung to the crotch of the tree wherein Malcolm stood.

"We must get up higher, among the leaves, and out of sight," he added. "There, you go first; place your foot here, seize that branch—so."

He lifted her, this time by her waist, and she was able to attain the spot he pointed out. Then he quickly followed, and in two minutes from

the time they had realized the danger, they were resting on a natural seat made of sturdy limbs, and were completely hidden from the road.

During this brief period, however, the roar of the mob had increased to terrific proportions. On it came, in a huge cloud of dust that blew about, revealing nearly a thousand men and boys armed with muskets, swords, clubs, revolvers, crowbars, and other weapons. They swept along the road in a disorderly mass, bound for the Upper Mines to force a shutdown there. Like a mighty tidal-wave they swept on; like a tornado they whirled forward, crazed with hatred and whiskey, thirsting for revenge and riot. Nearer and nearer they advanced toward the tree wherein were Malcolm and Hazle. Not a word did the girl say; indeed, her voice could not have been heard had she screamed with all her strength. But as the mob almost reached the cross-roads she trembled slightly, and threw her arms about Curtis, and hid her face on his shoulder, trying to escape the hideous sight. In that same second the physician saw a great, black phantom leap from the cross-roads opposite the turnpike, and stop in front of the advancing mob. It was a stallion, coal black, with arching neck, and white, frightened eyes. The moon shone down upon

his satin coat, and upon the tall, gaunt figure astride him, who sat arrayed in full canonicals, with gleaming revolver in his upraised right hand pointing toward the sky.

The mob suddenly became silent, and stood like an army of statues. Whence came the apparition which blocked their pathway? So sudden, so unexpected was its advent that it seemed a being sprung from the bowels of the earth. Such thoughts rushed across the minds of the mob during one moment. The next moment the Man on Horseback spoke in awful tones; his eyes fairly flashed; his presence was tremendous: "The man that takes wan more step forward is shot dead, and his soul sent to hell!"

Father O'Rourke stood upright in his stirrups and pointed his pistol at the strikers.

"Back!" he shouted. "Disperse! Go home! And woe and iverlashting tormint to him who dares hisitate, fer not one av yez dare dishobay!"

They looked hastily at this unyielding, commanding figure; they remembered who he was. And with one accord they turned and fled, terror-stricken, along the way they had come. The priest waited until the last one had disappeared and then rode away.

Curtis looked down at Hazle, whose face was still hidden.

"Don't be frightened, Miss Johnson. It is all over, and they have gone home; there is no danger."

She raised her head and looked at him.

"Isn't there?" she murmured.

"No. Now we will get down again, this way. Here we are on the lowest limb. Give me your arms, so, and I will lower you carefully to the ground."

Her feet touched the earth, and she leaned heavily against the tree. Curtis at once dropped, alighting on his feet, and caught her as she reeled.

"I'm so tired," she whispered, and her eyes closed. Malcolm lifted her to a spot where the turf was soft and level, and laid her thereupon. He loosened the clothing about her throat, and applied to her nostrils a phial from his pocket-case.

"Poor little woman!" he said.

As the pungent odor performed its office Hazle's head moved. Then she opened her eyes and said:

"Where—am—I?"

"Not far from home, with Doctor Curtis.

"We'll go there as soon as you feel strong enough."

But before they started to walk back Mr. Johnson and Captain Crosby arrived in a carry-all. Curtis and Hazle were driven to the latter's home. Then the paymaster and the policeman returned to Mr. Payne's office, which they had left at Mrs. Johnson's solicitation to search for her daughter.

Payne and Scott were still talking of the demonstration, but they ceased when Johnson and Captain Crosby reappeared, and listened eagerly as they were told how the mad rush of the mob had been checked by Father O'Rourke.

"What had we better do?" asked Payne. "Telegraph Hawkeye to send his men here at once?"

"Are all arrangements made?" said Scott. "What did young Weeks do when you sent him down the other night?"

"He did very well indeed," Mr. Payne replied emphatically. "He went to Hawkeye and explained the situation fully; told him how many men were on strike and how many others might go out. He says Hawkeye took voluminous notes, and went over the whole township with him

on a map. Then Weeks told him we might need him at any moment, and to have men in readiness to send upon a cipher telegram from me. He also arranged the ciphers."

"Excellent," Superintendent Scott said, and he turned to the paymaster.

"What do you think, Johnson?"

"I am greatly in hopes this matter can be settled down. If we bring in those outsiders, our old men will stay out until doomsday."

"What do you think, Crosby?" said Mr. Payne. "Had we better send for more Coal and Iron police?"

"No, sir! There are only six scattered around the different collieries at Keytown that we could possibly procure. Their very presence would lead to acts of disorder on the part of the men. And what could seven of us do against two thousand men?"

"Three thousand, you mean," corrected Mr. Payne.

"Why, the Upper Mine hasn't gone out?"

"No, but it will before morning. Look here," continued the operator, walking to the window and pointing through it to a tree; "do you see that broken branch? That was not broken an hour ago."

The three men waited in silence for explanation, and it was soon forthcoming.

"I met Pat Burney early this morning down in the office below this floor," Mr. Payne continued. "Nobody else was there. I told him he was a fool to throw his chances away with a crowd of ignorant, poverty-stricken strikers. If he wanted to serve me, he could do so. I gave him a hundred dollars to find out if the men at the Upper Mines would strike, and told him I would pay well for further inside information."

"Well, I'll be hanged!" said Scott. "I thought he was a leading spirit among the men."

"He is," laughed Mr. Payne, resuming his seat, "and that's the only reason he is of any value to me. We agreed on that signal. If the Upper Mines were to be shut down, I would find that branch broken before midnight. You see it is broken now."

The operator paused again, and turned his head inquiringly. There was a hurried rush of feet in the road outside. A dozen men ran down past the office, and then came the cry of a woman's voice:

"Fire! Fire!"

Mr. Payne leaped to the window. Perspira-

tion seemed to spurt from the pores of his forehead and he trembled with anger.

"By heavens!" he roared. "The devils have set fire to the Upper Mines breaker!"

The others glanced through the window. All was black, except far beyond the hill, above which was a canopy, lurid at first, but growing brighter each moment.

"If you can do anything, Scott, go at once, and take Crosby with you!"

The two hurried downstairs and whirled away in the carry-all, which had been waiting all this time by the office door. Then Payne turned to his paymaster.

"Have you forgotten how to use the key?"

"No."

"Get New York, if possible, and send this cipher message 'rush' to Hawkeye."

Both descended to the lower floor, in one corner of which stood a telegraph instrument, and Johnson commenced to call for connections through to New York.

CHAPTER XI.

PATRICK BURNEY did not accompany the mob on their wild rush that evening, nor did Mike Boyle, nor Dominic McGarrah. These three sat behind closed doors in the house next to the barn which the strikers used as headquarters, and thence they directed, as well as they could, the course of events. They had determined that the men at the Upper Mines must be intimidated since they would not voluntarily strike, and they placed no check that evening upon the strikers who addressed the long meeting. The three leaders did not wish to openly advocate violence, but they knew the excited men would lose their judgment, in all probability, and attempt force. And they were right in this. They had even anticipated a repulse by the men at the Upper Mines, but were wholly unprepared for Father O'Rourke's intervention.

Of course neither Burney nor his two friends dared to be seen with the men. They were recognized as leaders, and would have been held responsible for a riot had one occurred; but they

had half a dozen trusted assistants who brought news of events as soon as they occurred. Two of the aides Patrick knew to be desperate men, who would hesitate at nothing. They had swung billies in the Molly Maguire days, and had escaped arrest only by what seemed a miracle. And these men he charged with the dangerous work of setting fire to the breaker if the mob failed.

With the breaker burned, the mines could not be worked. At that time and in that locality the building of a breaker occupied several months, and caused the expenditure of fifty or sixty thousand dollars. The burning of the one at the Upper Mines would tie up Herbert Payne & Company completely. Not a pound of coal could be produced.

Still the men there would not be in sympathy with the strikers unless something was done for them. Chairman Boyle had served notice to the Upper Mines men, three days previous, that they had been expelled from the Union. The present plan, suggested by Burney, was to reinstate them if they would be loyal, and allow them benefits from the common fund when their savings should be exhausted. They would be glad to accept this proposition, he reasoned, now that they would

be thrown out of work by the burning of the breaker. And results proved his judgment correct.

Captain Crosby and Superintendent Scott drove rapidly toward the fire, passing scores and scores of strikers, who were hurrying thither. These fellows hooted at the two officers, and some even threw stones at the carry-all, but no rejoinder was made. They reached a hillock, at the foot of which was the burning breaker, a seething mass of flame, that roared and hissed, and spat huge mouthfuls of sparks high above it. At a safe distance stood a crowd of men and boys, with here and there a group of women. Half of the men carried clubs, or muskets, or swords, which they had brought home from the war.

Scott and Crosby sat there overlooking the scene, while their horse pawed the ground and trembled with fear. Then said the Superintendent:

"There is nothing we can do. They have everything their own way."

"We'd better go back. At least we can prevent any of those drunken brutes from attacking Mr. Payne in his office."

The bay roadster was turned, and rapidly drew the carry-all back to the office. There they found

Mr. Payne and Paymaster Johnson, together with half a dozen clerks, book-keepers, and heads of departments (commonly called "bosses"), who had gathered when the disturbance reached their ears. Most of them had revolvers or guns, and the operator told Captain Crosby to place them on guard in the office and in the Company store until morning, lest a rush should be made by the infuriated strikers.

Mrs. Payne had sent two house servants in a carriage after her husband, so he and Paymaster Johnson were quickly driven to the mansion. They found gardeners and stablemen patrolling the piazzas, under the direction of Gertrude, who suddenly had developed astonishing bravery. The operator's wife was locked in her room in a hysterical condition.

Mr. Johnson stayed but a few minutes before being driven to his own little house around the corner. His watch marked two o'clock in the morning as he entered his gate, but lights were burning in the parlor. His wife flung open the front door and kissed him affectionately.

"Are you all right, dear?" she asked.

"Yes, only a little tired. And Hazle?"

"Resting quietly; and Doctor Curtis is here, as you see. He refused to leave us alone."

"It is very good of you to be so thoughtful, Curtis." Mr. Johnson shook the younger man's hand warmly. "But come," he added, playfully slipping his wife's arm through his own; "can't you get us something to eat? I'm as hungry as a bear, and I know the doctor is the same."

"Why of course I can. Just sit down for a moment, you poor fellow, and I'll bustle around."

She went out of the parlor, and it seemed but a moment before she returned to ask the men into the dining-room.

"I don't know as you will approve of such a late supper, doctor—or such an early breakfast—but I eat when I'm hungry; and somehow the plan seems to do me good," said the paymaster, indicating the chair at his right, and Malcolm took it.

"If you'll promise me not to tell, I'll let you into a secret," he responded. "Physicians never, under any circumstances, follow themselves the advice they give to patients."

Then they all laughed again, and helped themselves to the cold meat, and bread and butter, and fruit that Mrs. Johnson had set upon the table.

"Now the coffee will be ready in two minutes," she said, bringing out cups and saucers. "Why, Hazle! what did you come down for?"

"I didn't think you would forget me in all this little feast!" exclaimed the girl as she stepped into the room. "Oh, papa, I'm *so* glad to see you home safe!" She threw her arms about him and kissed him again and again. Then she sat on the arm of his chair, with one hand on his shoulder, and addressed Curtis:

"You mustn't think me rude, doctor in neglecting to speak to you, but I was so anxious about this dear old man of mine!"

"I shall never forget it," he said with mock severity. "It cuts me to the quick, I assure you."

"How quick?" she foolishly asked, and they all laughed. "Do you know, papa," she added, looking scornfully at the handsome young physician, "that we couldn't get rid of this man all the evening? We begged him to go, but he stayed and stayed in the parlor, until mamma sent me to bed. I believe he was afraid to go home alone for fear he'd meet the strikers."

"Now, Hazle, keep quiet!" Her mother entered with a steaming coffee-pot, and placed it by her own plate. "I don't know what I would have done without Doctor Curtis to-night. Your father away, and we all alone, and those terrible men roaming around! It was enough to frighten

any one. I shall not forget his kindness in staying here."

Mrs. Johnson did not know whether her guest would understand Hazle's spirit of fun, and wanted to smooth matters over. But the young woman was irrepressible.

"I know what I should have done," she rejoined gayly, slightly swinging one dainty foot back and forth. "I should have gone to sleep, like a sensible being, just as I did."

"Steady," said her father.

Instantly her whole appearance changed, and her tones of raillery to those of warm friendship:

"No, Doctor Curtis, you really mustn't mind me. We all joke so much here that I forget how it sounds to a visitor."

"Don't spoil it by explaining!" he begged. "I'm enjoying it—and the luncheon—immensely."

She slid to the floor, and procuring a little chair that had been hers in childhood, brought it close to her father's and sat in it, resting one elbow on his knee, and her chin in that hand. They made a very pretty picture, these two: Mr. Johnson, so rugged, so manly; and the slender girl in a light house-gown of some soft material above the yoke of which were her full, rounded

throat, her magnificent eyes, and her dark hair. A single lamp shed soft rays upon them, and upon Mrs. Johnson, and upon the table and the other furniture, undeniably inexpensive, but really artistic.

The Company Doctor wanted to go back to his rooms in the hotel when the repast was concluded, but that suggestion would not be heard of. So he spent the remainder of the night in Mrs. Johnson's one little guest-chamber. It seemed very odd to him that acquaintance should so quickly ripen into what he already deemed friendship. But he did not try to analyze it. He was strangely happy in the thought. That it should be so was enough. Besides, he was tired and wanted to go to sleep. And he went.

CHAPTER XII.

JIM McMANUS, editor of the Keytown *Miners' Herald*, printed an interesting paper the following morning. The mob, the riot checked by Father O'Rourke, and the burning breaker were all treated of fully; but far more important news was that of a strike at three other collieries nearer Keytown, operated by those who had no business relations with Mr. Payne. The men had gone out on a "sympathy" strike, and others were expected to follow.

"It is believed," said *The Herald*, "that within a few days every colliery in the Middle Coalfield will be closed."

Great was the joy at Myrtle when the strikers there read the news. Burney, and Boyle, and McGarrah slept until eight o'clock, having been up all night, but were awakened by the firing of guns and revolvers. They hurried out of bed, suspecting a riot, and were greatly relieved to find the men were only celebrating the victory. After ascertaining this fact and eating breakfast,

they proceeded to their council-chamber near the headquarters.

"Ut's domd glad Oi am," remarked Patrick, lighting his dudeen, "that nobuddy wor hoorted in th' charruge lasht noight whin his riverince shtopped th' byes."

"Roight yez be, my laddybuck," replied Boyle, jocularly. "An' he cudn't hev done a betther shtroke fer th' cause. Oi wuz afeared av a foight bechune our byes an' thim ut th' Ooper Mine."

"Thare do be wan thing Oi hav to sphake av." Dominic McGarrah paused to bite into a plug of tobacco, and then continued: "Th' byes don't whant to make anny more violince at prishint, sooch az boornin' a brakher. We moost kape solid wid th' pooblic. Uf they goes tu usin' a billy on a boss, fer example, we moight az well quit now. Our loine av worruk do be in havin' a frank, open tahlk wid Misther Payne, an' compromisin' av th' whole matther."

"Thot do be the roight way tu spake, Dominic," said Patrick approvingly. "But how is thot to be done?"

"Ut seems to me that we had bettter go intil his offish an' tahlk ut ahl over agin."

"We wull, say ut ilivin o'clock."

It was then scarcely nine in the morning, but the leaders had a thousand things to attend to. Messengers were constantly arriving from one point or another. By ten o'clock they brought word that the three Keytown collieries mentioned in the *Miners' Herald* would be shut down at noon. And when Chairman Boyle announced this to the great crowd of strikers in headquarters, it seemed as if pandemonium were let loose. It was but a question of time, they reasoned, when the operators would have to give in to the demands. The market was so active that mines elsewhere were working overtime, and therefore miners from other points were not at all likely to apply for work at the Myrtle collieries. As to running the latter with ordinary laboring men, that was an impossibility. Experience of years was necessary before a man was capable of becoming a miner. Besides, few were the unemployed who would care to go to the coal regions at that time to fill positions vacated by strikers. The memory of Molly Maguire beatings and murders was too fresh in the public mind. The cost to Mr. Payne, meanwhile, was enormous. With the exception of running the breakers, his operating expenses were nearly as great as if the

mines were producing several thousand tons of coal per day.

He was saving the wages of the men, to be sure, but the great pumps had to be worked night and day in order that the mines might not be flooded. The machinery, intricate, and vast in extent, must be kept in perfect condition; and his sales-agents in New York were seeing old customers go to rivals in the business, from whom it might be difficult to regain them. None but Mr. Payne and his intimates knew the extent of the loss caused by the burning of the Upper Mines breaker. It was completely destroyed, together with much of the timbering on the slope. The strikers estimated the loss all the way from ten to fifty thousand dollars. As a matter of fact seventy thousand would scarcely cover the damage. Of course the operator was greatly disturbed by the conflagration; he had not estimated correctly the temper of the strikers.

"If they burn one breaker," he reasoned, "why would they hesitate to burn the other two, or even to set fire to the office building, or my house?"

He sent for the sheriff of the county, and was closeted with him while Chairman Boyle addressed the strikers' meeting that morning.

When summoned by Payne, Sheriff Henry Simmons did not deliberate. He went at once. Payne had contributed a great deal of money, and more influence, to secure his election. He had heard of the strike with dismay, for well he knew that no sheriff's posse strong enough to control three thousand desperate miners could be organized in that county, or in any other. But Payne had literally made him sheriff; so he hastened to Myrtle, and to Payne's office. He passed a dozen strikers on the way and nodded to them. All knew him, and understood what was his errand. One of them even halted him, saying:

"This is a bad place for you, Henry. I would not stay here long. You can't do anything."

And he replied:

"Boys, you know my position. I'm sworn to maintain order."

He was by no means cheerful when Albert Weeks ushered him into Mr. Payne's presence.

"Good morning, Simmons. I see you came on time."

"Yes, I started as soon as I got your message."

They looked at each other in silence for a moment, and then the operator resumed:

"You know the situation pretty well. Every

one of my men are out, and late last night they burned a breaker. You can't possibly handle them, and will have to call on the governor for troops unless you agree to do what I say."

"I know it, sir."

"Furthermore, a month would elapse before any of the National Guard got on the ground, and the Lord only knows what would happen in the mean time. Not only that, but if through you troops are brought here to fight workingmen, you might as well move out of the county at once. You could never have any office in the future, or any prosperous business, either."

He watched the sheriff narrowly. Simmons twisted his heavy red mustache nervously, and his florid face became redder than ever. His big feet shuffled on the floor, and a mighty sigh escaped his great chest. Then he replied:

"I know that, too."

Mr. Payne's whole manner changed. He fixed his gaze upon the unhappy official, and said emphatically:

"On the other hand, you are high sheriff of this county, and I shall hold you accountable hereafter for the destruction of every cent's worth of my property. If you want to work with me, I'll take care of you. Will you do as I say?"

"Why, certainly, sir. I'll do anything to help you preserve order."

"All right. I will provide you with a sufficient posse, and you are to deputize a friend of mine at midnight to take charge of the strike here. Then you are to telegraph the governor that you are in need of no assistance. You can be here as often as you like, but you are not to interfere with your deputy."

"All right, sir."

At this moment Weeks entered the room, and said that Burney, Boyle, and McGarrah desired to speak with Mr. Payne.

"Show them up," he said, "and tell Mr. Scott and Mr. Johnson to come also."

When all had appeared the operator turned to the delegates and asked:

"What is it you want?"

Boyle didn't reply immediately. He was surprised to see Sheriff Simmons. Finally he said:

"We coome, sorr, to ashk uf yez wull accayde to our dimands?"

Mr. Payne carelessly twirled his eye-glasses.

"I have nothing to say. The whole matter is now in the hands of the sheriff."

"And I recognize no delegate nor union," said the official. "Now, boys," he added in

friendly tones, "you and I know each other. I don't want to make trouble, but this thing can't go any farther. I am going down to issue a proclamation to the strikers in a few minutes, and I wish you'd go ahead and have things fixed so they'll hear me quietly."

Boyle was about to make an angry reply, but Burney gave his arm a pinch, and stepped forward, saying:

"Ut's ahll roight, Misther Sheriff; youse coome down to headquarthers in tin minoots, an' we'll shtart ahn ahead."

The delegates left the offices and hurried down the road.

"Oi ixpicted th' sheriff here," said Burney, "an' now the byes moost be domd quiet loike; an' yuse, Mike Boyle—youse kape a shivil tongue in yer hed. Uf ut hadn't bin fer me, youse'd domd him thare and thinn, an' our goose'd bin cooked. Don't ye know thot our onliest salvashun do be in kapin' ahff th' sooljers?"

The chairman did not reply. He realized that he had been on the verge of a grave error.

The three hastened to their council-chamber and summoned a dozen trusted lieutenants. The situation was rapidly explained, and they were ordered to mingle with the crowd in the barn to

prevent any disorder, or disrespect even, when Henry Simmons should appear. This done, the leaders stepped over the way and went upon the platform. The barn was well filled with strikers, who stood about smoking and chatting, but a larger crowd from the outside entered as they saw the delegates go in by a rear door. When Boyle called the meeting to order, there was absolute silence.

"We hev joost coome from Misther Payne's offish," he began, "an' do be here to say that he has plashed the sthrike intil th' hands av th' shayriff."

At this an uneasy movement swept over the crowd, but Chairman Boyle continued without noticing it:

"He wull be prisint in a few minoots to sphake a few worruds; an' uf ony mon av youse thries any thricks wid him, Oi wull declare the sthrike ahff, fer he wull tiligraph for sooljers, an' we moight az well give up furrust as lasht, in thot ivint."

Burney stepped forward at this point and whispered to Boyle, who immediately resumed:

"He do be now at th' dhure, an' here he sthands. Gintlemin, Oi hev th' playshure av

introjucin' Misther Simmons, hoigh shayruff av th' county."

There was no hesitation about Simmons. He walked briskly to the front of the platform and began:

"During the last day or two much disorder has ensued here. This must stop now. As sheriff of the county I warn all men to respect the laws of the State. I will tolerate no more trouble. I command you to disperse and go quietly about your business or suffer the consequences."

Two or three of the strikers made a rush toward the platform. But Burney sprang forward and cowed them by his very presence, and without speaking a word. One man uttered a yell of defiance; but scarcely had it escaped his lips when two of Boyle's lieutenants threw him to the floor and choked him viciously. Simmons never flinched. He stood there quietly, until the flash of anger had disappeared. He then left the barn and stepped into a buggy, and drove toward the railroad station at Keytown.

Pat Burney went to bed early that evening, but at midnight was awakened by a thumping upon his front door. He jumped up and faced a man dressed in the garb of a locomotive engineer. And this man spoke:

"It's me, Patsy; you know me. I am Walters, as runs the New York train up from Easton!"

"Do thot be youse, Sammy?" Burney replied, rubbing his sleepy eyes. "An' phwat brings yez heer ut thish toime av' th' noight?"

The other was breathing hard, both from excitement and physical exertion, but he managed to speak coherently.

"I jumped out of me cab, Patsy, and rin all the way over from Keytown, leaving Billy to take keer of the machine, to tell you that scabs is on the way to take the strikers' places."

"Shcabs?"

"Yes, sur, scabs! A whole train-load of 'em. They followed us up on a special, but switched off at the junction, so as to come directly here instead of going to Keytown."

"Wull, Oi'll be domd! Doos Mither Payne think we do be dead heer? Say, Sammy, do youse run and wake up Moike Boyle an' Dominic McGarrah, an' tell thim to coome heer to wanst, an' wait fer me."

"I will, Patsy."

The engineer hastened away in the darkness. Burney dressed himself rapidly and hurried to the home of an assistant who had proved worthy of confidence. To him the news was told; and

he was directed to summon at once the twelve aides, on whom the leaders most depended, to the council-chamber. Then Pat went home and waited for Boyle and McGarrah. They came together, the former bubbling over with anger.

"Here's the dhivil to pay!" he cried. "Phwat will we do wid these dhirty scabs? We moost kape ordher, th' Lorrud knows; but whin our byes foinds out who they bees, thare wull be a foight!"

"Shut yer mout, an' listhen ter me." Pat drew the others within his door, and sat down. "Thare do be only wan way. Oi hev here th' foive hundhred dollars Misther Payne give to th' Myrtle Hose Company. Th' check worr cashed th' nixt day. Dominic heer, as threashurer av th' union, can give me a chick for that sum, an' Oi'll toorn it ohver ter him. Th' twelve aides wull be prisint in tin minoots. They wull tahke az much az nade be, an' pay th' scabs' fare back to New Yorruk, tellin' thim that if thay shtay here afther th' thrain goes out ut four o'clock th' Molly Maguires wull kill th' lasht mon av thim. Nivir a bit d'yez moind, now; they'll go back fasht enough," he concluded confidently.

As there seemed nothing else to do, this plan was agreed upon at once. The exchange of

money was made, and the leaders went to the council-room, where the twelve lieutenants were gathering.

Within an hour from the time Sam Walters awakened Burney the twelve were at the Myrtle station awaiting the arrival of the special train. They had little time to spare before the locomotive and five cars steamed up and withdrew to a siding. Excepting the first car, none contained a light. Not a man stood upon any platform. In fact, the cars were tenantless, as far as exterior appearance was concerned—but had the lieutenants been inside, they would have known better. Their business, however, was to meet the scabs as they left the cars and persuade them to return home. So when the cars stopped moving the twelve went forward in a body and approached the first one, from which three strangers stepped. The moon was back of a cloud, and the new arrivals could not be seen plainly. But the strikers walked up confidently, and one of them said:

“Byes, Oi think yez may have coome here to worruk in th’ mines. Is ut so?”

One of the strangers stepped toward the spokesman and looked at him keenly. This stranger was tall, broad-shouldered, heavily built.

He carried a slouch hat in his hand. His dark, brown hair was closely cropped; a small, dark mustache half-concealed a determined mouth. He coughed slightly, but none of the strikers noticed that at the sound men within the cars moved close to the doors and stood there waiting expectantly.

"Oi ashk yez uf ut is throe that yez are here to take th' jobs av sthrikers?" the spokesman repeated.

"Why do you ask?" the stranger said pleasantly.

"Bekase youse luk loike th' bossh av th' gang; an' Oi give yez throe warnin' an' fair, that ony mon av youse as shteps out av theshe cahrs wull git thrated be th' Molly Maguires. Ah, thay be not ahll cahrpsees yit, avin uf twinty-wan av thim wor muhrd'r'd an th' schaffold!"

The stranger waited until he had finished, then said sharply:

"Close in, men! Don't hurt them unnecessarily."

The strikers saw forms pouring out of the car as water rushes through a dam when suddenly the gate is opened. They felt strong hands seize them; they saw carbine-barrels shimmer in the moonlight; they felt bands of metal slipped

around their wrists and fastened with a powerful "click, click!" Before they could utter a cry, or commence a struggle, they were securely handcuffed and surrounded by a crowd of infantrymen.

The tall, commanding stranger spoke again, this time to one of his own men:

"Captain, place them in the guardhouse until further orders."

The subordinate saluted, and pointing to the last car of the train, curtly remarked:

"Git! No nonsense, either! We don't want to shoot you unless we have to."

Preceded by a file, and surrounded by the remainder of the squad, the confused strikers mechanically walked into the car indicated.

For reasons best known to themselves, the three leaders did not wish to be seen at the station sending back the scabs. They had told their lieutenants to notify them in case of any unexpected trouble. If no word were brought, Burney, Boyle, and McGarrah would wait quietly in the council-room until the four o'clock train left. Then the lieutenants were to report their success in sending the scabs home. So the three waited and dozed until dawn, when one after another awoke.

"Phwat toime is ut?" said Boyle, opening the door and looking out. "Howly saints! Ut be afther four now; but where be th' spalpeens we sint to th' thrain?"

"Oi dunno. Cud thay be misdoubtedly gone across tu th' headquarthers?" McGarrah suggested.

"Loikley thay hev," Pat replied. He led the way out of the little building and across the road to the barn. The dark curtains had been rolled aside, but the sun had not showed its face. However, the three saw a man standing by the barn door, and others passing back and forth on each side of the building.

"Ut seems to me," said Burney, halting and gazing at the strangers, "thot thay hev an on-familiar luk to thim."

Then he walked forward briskly, stopping a few feet from him who stood by the barn door, and who said:

"Well, what do you want?"

"Phwat do Oi wahnt? Oi wahnt in the barrn, av coorse."

"You can't get in. Move along now."

"Ut seems to me"—Burney advanced slowly, stealthily—"thot Oi *wull* git in, seein' as how Oi hev th' conthrol av that barrn——"

The stranger said not a word, but a voice within the building called in command:

"Attention, company! Forward, March!"

There was the sound of heavy footsteps on the barn floor. The doors were thrown open. Patrick, Mike, and Dominic saw, standing back of the stranger they had accosted, a score of others, each wearing a slouch hat and short, blue coat with brass buttons, and carrying a carbine. Then the quiet-looking man said calmly:

"You see, my friend, that you haven't control of this barn. If you want to keep out of trouble, you'll go along about your business. This barn belongs to Mr. Payne, and I'm here in charge of it, under orders of Inspector Hawkeye."

"Hawkeye!" exclaimed Burney. He stood in silent astonishment for a full minute, then walked away followed by his friends. Out upon the principal street of the village they went. Three detectives, armed with carbines, were on guard at the Company Store. Three more were stationed at the offices. Two stood at the lodges leading to Mr. Payne's park, and far away, upon an eminence, could be seen his frame mansion. Along each of its four sides strode a man, armed and determined. Even the Myrtle Hotel was not unprotected.

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. PAYNE thought he had acted wisely in summoning Robert Hawkeye and a force of his private detectives to take charge of the strike. Certain it is that he had acted promptly, and for good reason. In years past he had been through half a dozen minor labor troubles, and two important strikes. Well he knew the danger of trying to control unemployed, desperate men by moral force. Therefore did he determine not to risk his property. He had sent Albert Weeks to New York on the day of the strike to place Inspector Hawkeye in readiness for a sudden call. So well pleased was Mr. Payne with the way in which his son's tutor had left Myrtle without exciting suspicion, and performed his mission, and returned, that he took him out of the schoolroom and into his own office to act for the time being as private secretary; and Weeks at once began to make his services in that capacity valuable. He installed himself in Mr. Payne's outer office, and when any one called to see the mine-operator Weeks bade him sit down, while he ascertained

whether the visitor should be admitted. He saw that Mr. Payne's letters were conveniently arranged; that the temperature and the ventilation of the apartment were as they should be; and when the detectives arrived in their special train, shortly after midnight, he sat in Mr. Payne's office and received Inspector Hawkeye instead of sending word of his arrival to Mr. Payne's residence. At this Mr. Payne was surprised. When they met at nine the following morning, he was disposed to be indignant.

"What do you mean, at this crisis, Weeks, in not letting me know of Hawkeye's coming?"

"There was absolutely no reason for awaking you," replied the young man, as if it were a matter of little importance. "Nothing has gone amiss. Nothing would have transpired differently had you been on the ground. It would have been highly injudicious for me to have broken into your rest. You need all the sleep you can get, sir, or I am mistaken. This strike isn't settled."

Payne looked in astonishment at the pale young man, who thus spoke as if he were a member of the firm. For the first time the operator noticed Albert's jaw, and that his lips closed as if by powerful machinery. He observed the cool,

clear, calm eyes, the strong, commanding nose, of the New-Englander. Then said he to himself, "I have a valuable assistant in this stripling from the Rugged Country."

The conversation took place in Payne's breakfast-room, whither he had summoned Weeks by messenger. After his meal had been finished the employer and his secretary together went to see Inspector Hawkeye.

"It's a pleasant morning," said Payne. "Let us walk, and instead of taking the roadway go across the park and through the grove."

They stepped forward briskly, and soon were among the pines, and maples, and oaks and were hidden from the mansion.

"I wonder if the men are enraged over the coming of the Hawkeyes?" he continued, and before Weeks could reply the question was answered. A pistol-shot rang out in the air, a puff of smoke floated above a clump of bushes, and rapid footsteps could be heard becoming less and less distinct. Payne stood like a statue for a half-minute. His face was white. Beads of perspiration oozed from the pores of his forehead. But Albert Weeks laughed and picked up a button which the bullet had cut from his loose coat. "That striker was nervous," he said.

"Here, sir, take this button; you may want it for a souvenir."

Payne mechanically placed it in a pocket. Then he mopped his face with his handkerchief and exclaimed:

"Great heavens, that was a close call!"

"Yes, for me. You must be careful hereafter."

They went forward at an accelerated pace, with Payne in advance. After leaving the park and passing the office buildings they crossed a road and found themselves at the entrance to the railway-yards, where coal trains were made up. The special had been cut in two, one car remaining quite near the office, but the four other cars standing three hundred yards distant. The operator stepped upon the track and turned toward the single car, when a man with a carbine faced him and cried:

"Halt!"

"Hold on!" the coal king exclaimed, raising his hand. "Point that gun the other way."

"This is Mr. Payne," Albert said angrily to the detective. "Do you want to lose your job, you fool?"

"How in hell am I to know him!"

"Well, you know me," continued the tutor, advancing upon the sentinel and looking him in

the eye. "But if you don't keep a civil tongue in your head you won't have enough of it left to know anybody else. Come on, Mr. Payne, we'll go see the Inspector."

Again they went forward, the operator looking all about him. The yard had assumed partially the appearance of a military camp. Upon each of its sides paced armed men wearing the semi-uniform which distinguishes the Hawkeye force—slouch hat, and dark-blue sack-coat with brass buttons. To and fro they walked, steadily, regularly, unceasingly, unconcernedly. Others patrolled the region surrounding the cars. Upon a ridge a thousand feet beyond the opposite side of the yard was a black mass of humanity, men, women, and children, and they set up a ferocious yell as Mr. Payne appeared.

"Don't stop!" said Weeks. "Don't pay any attention to them. Go right along to this single car here, which is Hawkeye's private coach."

At the foot of one platform stood a detective, who presented arms to Payne—the strikers' yells had identified him.

"Tell the Inspector I wish to see him."

The orderly respectfully saluted and entered the car. A few moments later he reappeared, saying:

"Please walk in, gentlemen."

They did so, and found themselves in a compartment occupying a third of the car. In one corner was a table covered with telegraphic instruments, and Payne glanced through the window close by and saw that already connection had been made with the switchboard in his office. In another corner was a high desk, at which a book-keeper was busily engaged. In front of him sat an amanuensis transcribing from shorthand a number of letters. The other half of the compartment was enclosed with a strong partition, such as is found in a bank, and back of it were the cashier and two clerks, all engrossed in their affairs. The visitors had time to notice this, and the fact that each of the men wore a holster, or had a carbine within easy reach, when Inspector Hawkeye entered the compartment from another just beyond.

"This is Mr. Payne," Weeks said.

"Good morning, I am very glad to see you," the famous detective responded pleasantly. "Won't you step into my private office?"

They followed in the direction of his gesture, and found themselves in the second compartment. Three chairs and a roller-top desk comprised the furniture, which was of heavy oak.

The chairs were richly upholstered; the desk was littered with papers. An artistic rug lay upon the floor. A dainty water-color sketch and a couple of excellent etchings were tastefully displayed on the wall. Upon the desk, leaning against steel handcuffs, was a photograph of Hawkeye's wife and baby—a sweet, refined face was hers looking down at the chubby, laughing child. The Inspector noticed his visitor's interest, and threw open the door leading to the third compartment, remarking:

“This next room is where I rest and enjoy myself.”

In it were a wardrobe and washstand, a small mirror, two well-filled hanging book-cases, and a cot bedstead. The opposite wall was hidden by a frame containing a series of rollers on which maps were hung. Payne noticed that an elaborate topographical map of Myrtle and its surroundings was stretched in full view. It was marked in a score of places with pins, about the heads of which were fastened bits of colored worsteds. After inspecting this apartment, all three re-entered the private office and for nearly two hours discussed the strike. Then Hawkeye took his visitors through the other cars. Two were fitted up as barracks; one as kitchen and mess-

room, and the third was an armory. At one end of the last was a large iron cage, and in it Payne saw twelve men chained to staples. They listened sullenly as Hawkeye explained why he had arrested them.

"Take the cowards to a justice of the peace at once and have them given their reward," said Payne after leaving the car.

"Who would you recommend?" inquired the Inspector.

"Gottlieb Schmidt, of Keytown, is as likely to settle them as any one."

Later in the day the prisoners were given a hearing before the German justice. He at once discharged them. Payne didn't know that one of his foremen, born in the County Clare, had taken work away from Schmidt's son two weeks before the strike, nor that Schmidt had at that time opened a general store, with his boy in charge, and was endeavoring to obtain patronage from the strikers.

Thirty per cent of the miners were Germans; ten per cent were English and Welsh, and a like proportion American. But in the strike they were not so prominent as the Irish, who numerically equalled all the others combined, and vastly exceeded them in aggressiveness.

For a week after Hawkeye's arrival the strikers kept very quiet. They were baffled but not subdued, and they could not be conquered so long as Burney continued to lead them. Four-fifths of the detectives were thugs from the slums of New York; bruisers who had answered an advertisement published in the daily papers; men who could obtain no steady work because of past records and present behavior. These men Hawkeye supplied with arms and equipments of which he kept in stock a number sufficient for a regiment. He paid each of the thugs three dollars per day, and charged Herbert Payne & Company ten dollars. One out of every possible five or six of the force at Myrtle were detectives in fact as well as in name, and they were supposed to hold the others in check.

When a week had passed without the slightest disturbance, Weeks told his employer that he thought it would be a good plan for Hawkeye to reduce his force one-half; that it was foolish to pay for the services of three hundred men when two hundred or less were sufficient; and Payne broached this matter to Hawkeye, and the latter's orderly overheard the Inspector reply:

"Well, I'll consider it and let you know in the morning."

The orderly was one of the thugs, and this was his first experience in the Hawkeye service; but he was no fool. Bred in the streets of New York, his wits had been sharpened abnormally. He related the incident to a pal with whom he was walking on the outskirts of Myrtle shortly after dark.

"Dere's only one t'ing ter do—git dese miners inter a row a puppose, an' skeer de boss so's he won't das t' let any uv us be fired."

"Youse hit de nut de fust time," said the orderly. "But who's dis little chip a-sailin' down de road all alone?"

The other looked in the direction indicated and saw a young girl approach. She wore a white gown. A rose was in her hair. She carried an empty basket. When she got within ten feet of the thugs one of them said:

"Ah dere, me doisy! W'ere 're youse goin', me purty maid?"

The girl trembled visibly and hesitated, and then hurried on. The men turned and followed her. She broke into a run.

"Wot's de use'r hurry'n?" the orderly said, leering over her shoulder. He did not notice that his pal had deserted him. He did not hear the trotting of a horse around the curve of the road.

"Hole on dere, chip," he continued, grasping her soft, white arm with his rough dirty hand. "Now le's walk along quiet like an' enjoy ourselves——"

Suddenly a light buggy, in which sat a tall man with a brown mustache, rushed into view. A girlish cry of despair rent the air:

"Oh, Malcolm, help me!"

The reins almost snapped, so violently was the doctor's horse thrown back upon his haunches. Curtis leaped over the wheel and rushed like a whirlwind upon the orderly. The butt of his whip "zung" through the air, and crashed upon the fellow's head, felling him. Unintentionally, he tripped the girl, and she was thrown to the ground in an opposite direction. In less than a minute all this happened; and more, for before Malcolm could raise Hazle from the ground, the bushes by the roadside were parted and Patrick Burney burst into sight. He uttered a wild Irish yell and fell upon the Hawkeye thug, battering him into unconsciousness with his great fists.

"Orroch, ye dom'd blaggard," he muttered, giving the senseless man a parting kick.

Then he stepped over to Curtis, who was fanning the girl with his hat as she leaned against a tree.

"Be th' howly Virgin, ut is Missh Hazle !" Patrick gasped. Then he turned again to the Hawk-eye and shook his fist. His eyes glared like those of a wild beast.

"You'll pay dear fur this thrick, ye blud-thirsty broot!"

The bushes parted again, and through them came half a dozen strikers who had been secretly meeting in the woods, and who had heard Pat's yell of anger.

"Go through his pockets, byes; take out his dangersome vallybles, an' then gag him an' tie him fasht. Now, docthor, and you, Missh Hazle, dearie, wait whoile Oi bring th' harse an' boogy. See, he's munchin' th' grassh beyant."

Burney did this, and helped Curtis to make Hazle comfortable in the vehicle. Then the young physician drove away with her.

"This is the second time you have saved me," she said with a weak laugh. Her face was very pale; but as Curtis turned his magnificent brown eyes toward her, the color rose to her cheeks.

"I always was lucky," he rejoined; "but tell me how it happened."

She did so, beginning with her departure from the home of Widow Gorman, who was ill, and to whom she had taken a few delicacies. By the

time her story was concluded they had reached her father's house.

The orderly did not report for duty at midnight, nor the next morning. Later in the day he was found unconscious, tripped up by the thumbs to a branch of a tree, his bared back bleeding from a hundred cuts. Hickory switches scattered around showed what had caused those wounds.

CHAPTER XIV.

MALCOLM and Hazle saw a great deal of each other during the ensuing month. Accident had thrown them together twice under peculiar circumstances, and the girl's parents did not object to the growing friendship. Both father and mother realized that the Company Doctor was a gentleman, educated, and refined; Mrs. Johnson especially understanding his superiority over the ordinary young men of the neighborhood.

"It is seldom one sees such a handsome, brilliant fellow as he willing to settle down in a place like Myrtle," she said one evening. "He has a fine medical library in his office, and studies steadily. Doctor Curtis will make his mark yet."

"I hope so," her husband replied. "He certainly is bright and agreeable; but I can't see why he should want anything better than his present position. It pays him between five and six hundred dollars a month. Think of it!"

"That is the least part of it. He's laying up far greater treasure than mere money—knowledge, I mean."

And such was the case. Malcolm was not obliged to live at Myrtle. His family held an excellent position in New York. He had hosts of friends, and for that very reason left the city temporarily. With wisdom beyond his years, he chose a quiet spot for study and unusual surgical practice, fearing that he would waste his time at home. His mother and his sister attended every important social event of their set, and he would have been coerced into spending many precious hours in that way himself. He had a far greater ambition than to be merely one of the thousand physicians in the great city who possessed a good practice and an established social position. He felt the necessity for continuous study, uninterrupted by ephemeral pleasure such as would constantly distract his attention at home.

Mrs. Johnson knew that his mother had held a commanding position in one of the really exclusive circles of the metropolis, but they had not met for many years. The paymaster's wife supposed that Malcolm's father had lost all his money, and that for this reason the young man was glad to become a Company Doctor. The supposition that he was poor made no difference in her estimation. Her father had been considered wealthy many years ago, when that condition

was conceded to the New Yorker who possessed a couple of hundred thousand dollars. But her father had died poor in money, and she had married Mr. Johnson when he was a clerk making less than a thousand dollars a year. So she knew from personal experience how little contentment depends upon wealth; and the older she grew the more she realized that happiness can have no moneyed value.

As the weeks went by Gertrude Payne gradually became convinced that the Company Doctor was not for her. She did not really care for him, and was not even piqued to see that he preferred Hazle's society. The mine-operator's daughter possessed an excellent opinion of herself. She had been educated to believe that she was a superior being. So overweening was her personal regard that, instead of feeling angry at Hazle or Malcolm, she fairly pitied them.

"I really considered him on an equality at first," she said to herself one evening, as she mused on the veranda. "But he is no better than she is. I hope they'll be happy."

And in this hope she was sincere.

Curtis had asked himself a hundred times that week whether he loved Hazle, and a thousand times whether she felt more than friendly

toward him. Again he silently put these questions one evening as he stopped with her by her father's gate. And suddenly he told her of his love and asked her to become his wife, and she said she would.

CHAPTER XV.

WEEK after week went by and the strikers held out, but there was trouble in their ranks. None of the men had supposed the strike would last more than a couple of months; but when the allotted period passed they found Mr. Payne firm as adamant, and the detectives still on the ground. Inspector Hawkeye had gone back to New York, however, leaving his armed mercenaries in charge of Captain Clurg, his chief of staff. And this enraged the miners, who considered it an insult.

"Be th' powurz, that blaggard Hawkeye thrates us loike childer," said one brawny striker to Patrick Burney. "Thare he goes ahff home, regyardin' us av too schmall importansh to worry about himsilf. Oi tell yez, Pat, somehow this sthrike haz bin threatred injoodishus loike. Thare do be conshiderable tahlk be th' byes that th' ixicutive committhee don't be afther havin' backbone to shtand up intil th' boss. Be roights we shud have wan th' sthrike a month agone. Isn't ut so, byes?"

"Ut be!" cried his companions.

Burney listened silently and attentively. He held a long conference with Chairman Boyle and Secretary McGarrah. Then these three, constituting the Executive Committee, sent their resignations to a special meeting of the union which they called immediately.

By this time winter had commenced in earnest, and the strikers were penniless. Long ago their credit had been exhausted at the Keytown stores. But one morning Gottlieb Schmidt announced that he would trust the strikers as long as the trouble lasted. He would give all of them credit at his new store, unlimited as to time, but stipulating that no family should draw more than nine dollars' worth of supplies per week. The German police justice was persuaded to take this radical step by his son. The latter would do anything in his power to injure Mr. Payne; and he reasoned, also, that as the strikers would win in the end they would never forget him. The union, whose funds had run out, would see that he should be paid in full; and besides this, he could have captured the miners' trade from every other store in the region. In a few years he could control the general merchandise business of the whole field, and would be rich.

It was a bold stroke, a startling stroke to the other merchants, but none followed the example. Schmidt, however, kept his word, and for weeks clothed and fed over a thousand men, women, and children. But at last he couldn't stand the drain upon his resources, and was compelled to shut down on the plan. And then, indeed, suffering began. It is a hard matter to fight on an empty stomach in warm, pleasant weather; in December, when three feet of snow covers the ground, it is almost an impossibility. The Hawkeye toughs were well fed, well clad, well housed. They were earning twenty-one dollars per week, and saved nearly all of it. They disliked the idea of going back to New York to lounge around the Bowery lodging-houses, or to beg in Park Row. And yet they saw the strike nearing the end. But evil fate intervened. Three of them waited in a barn for the pretty daughter of a miner who went there to milk her father's cow.

The news spread like wildfire. Desperate men, led by the girl's father and brother, armed themselves, and like wild beasts swept down upon the village, shooting at Hawkeyes and beating them terribly with billies and knotted ropes that had seen service in Molly Maguire days.

Two detectives were killed and a dozen badly wounded.

The New York papers sent reporters to the scene, of course, and they interviewed Captain Clurg and Mr. Payne, who gave them thrilling stories. They also interviewed some of the strikers, but the successors to Burney and Boyle and McGarrah were timid men, who distrusted reporters and professed entire ignorance of the affair. As a logical result the newspaper correspondents did not obtain the truth, and the papers for several days bristled with dispatches telling of a slaughter by ferocious miners. Thus was the public opinion thrown against strikers.

Payne, however, knew the truth of the matter, and he prevented further trouble by telegraphing for Inspector Hawkeye and laying the case before him. Notwithstanding his sternness, Payne intended to be a just man.

Within a week after this occurrence the great operator received a call from Hazle Johnson. She came to his office, and he greeted her, surprised but pleased at the visit.

"Mr. Payne," she began without preliminary words, "do you remember little Tommy Gorman, the driver boy who was killed just before the strike commenced?"

"Let's see. Yes, I do."

"His mother died of starvation yesterday."

"My God! one of my people starved!"

His stern features contracted into an expression of horror. His face paled. He trembled at the sudden words. Hazle sat silent, watching him, attempting no explanation. The operator walked across the room twice. Then he whistled through a tube sharply and called Weeks to him.

"Mr. Weeks is acting as my secretary," he said, and Hazle bowed, indicating that she understood the matter. As the young man entered his employer spoke with difficulty.

"Mr. Weeks, something has happened that I would not have believed possible. One of my people has starved to death, and a woman at that."

Nervously he fingered his eye-glasses, and again he paced the floor. Then he said, a sob breaking his voice:

"Mr. Weeks, hereafter see that no others suffer. I can fight men, but I can't fight women and children."

This was the beginning of the end.

Hazle left after Mr. Payne had thanked her sincerely. Thenceforth coffee and flour were freely supplied from the Company Store to

women whose husbands or relatives upon whom they depended were strikers.

It must be remembered that Herbert Payne & Co. were not alone in fighting the battle against organized labor. Half a dozen of the largest operators in the Middle Coal-Field were involved, and the production of anthracite therefrom had practically ceased. For this reason the mines were working day and night in the Upper Field, whence Dominic McGarrah came, and in the Lower Field, Patrick Burney's former home. It was not strange, therefore, that operators in the Wyoming and the Schuylkill regions were happy. They were reasonably certain that the strike would not spread from the Lehigh district, and as long as it continued there affairs prospered elsewhere.

Payne knew this fact, and it angered him as much as the stubbornness with which his men held out. He knew that little by little the strikers were growing weaker. He knew that the funds of the Miners' Union had been practically exhausted, but that enough remained to relieve illness and cases of absolute starvation; the Widow Gorman, for example, would have been given bread had her awful condition been known. Besides that, by his own orders, coffee and flour

were provided for the women, and they, of course, gave to the men. Suddenly Payne thought of Patrick Burney and sent for him.

"Burney," he said, "this strike must end in a week. Do the work for me, and I will give you five hundred dollars cash and a position for life on salary."

"Oi preshume ut c'n be did, sorr; but not fer foive hundhred."

"Well, what's your price?"

"Foive t'ousand."

"You're crazy, man!"

"Oi may be; and thin maybe Oi bean't, sorr. You do be loosin' foive t'ousand dhollars iviry twinty-four hours now."

Payne realized this. It was a struggle to accede to the demands, but finally they compromised on twenty-five hundred. Then Patrick betook himself to the office of the *Keytown Miners' Herald*, and had a long talk with James McManus.

Ever since the strike began the editor had upheld the men. He begged them to refrain from violence, but he also praised them for punishing the Hawkeye thugs when they inflicted unprovoked assaults. But he knew as well as any one that there comes a time for surrender.

"Ut be domd foolishness to kape up th' foight,"

said Burney. "Th' min hev nawthin' to wear, and moighty little to ate. Th' wimen do be ill, an' th' childer thot thin youse cud see throo thim."

"I know it, Patrick."

McManus sighed, and brushed his gray hair from his broad forehead. His was a noble face. He loved the men and pitied them with an overflowing heart.

The editor had been considering this step for weeks. The next morning *The Miners' Herald* stated calmly but emphatically that the strike should be declared off, and that the men ought to acknowledge defeat at once. McManus put the case clearly before the readers. He reviewed the events leading to the strike and the disturbance itself. He stated that while their cause was just and ought to prevail, yet it was cowardly for the men to inflict further suffering upon the women and children.

The rage that burst forth when this article was read can be understood only by those who have lived among a mining population.

The new officers of the labor union called a special meeting and denounced *The Miners' Herald* in unmeasured terms. They declared their belief that Editor McManus was a traitor; that

he had been bribed by their hated enemies, the operators. And those present at the meeting pledged themselves to stop their subscriptions. Not merely that, but at the direction of the meeting the chairman who succeeded Mike Boyle appointed a committee of five to call upon all the merchants of Keytown and insist that they withdraw their advertisements from *The Miners' Herald*. If any one should decline so to do, the miners were pledged to refuse any business dealings with him. The men at that time had never heard of Boycott, the Irish captain, whose name has been given to a terrible engine of commercial destruction; but they were ready to use the then nameless engine. They knew it would be useless to try to dissuade McManus from the policy he had entered upon.

That day one-third of *The Miners' Herald's* circulation was cut off—twelve hundred subscriptions. Fully fifty per cent of the advertisements were withdrawn. The paper never recovered from the blow.

In after years McManus realized that the most ungrateful of men are those of the laboring class. And even more strongly was this realization forced upon Gottlieb Schmidt, who became bankrupt through trusting the miners during what is

known to history as "the long strike." Not one of those whose suffering he relieved attempted to pay for the food and clothing he freely gave when they were penniless. Not a cent was repaid to him by the Miners' Union.

The day that Patrick Burney interviewed Editor McManus a man wearing the slouch hat and blue coat of the Hawkeye force called upon Mr. Payne at the latter's office. He was a short, thick-set man, with black hair and a heavy black mustache. His keen dark eyes constantly roved from side to side, and he spoke with an inimitable accent.

"I called upon you, Mr. Payne," he said, "about a matter which may prove of great importance. I am Ivan Pedroski, a Russian, and a graduate of the University of Odessa, and I have travelled much. Since coming here as a Hawkeye detective, I understand the difficulty you have in fighting men who, though stubborn and uneducated, possess intelligence to a marked degree. It is a colossal task to handle the bright Irishmen, Scotchmen, and Germans who work in your mines."

He looked keenly at Mr. Payne for a moment, and the latter returned his glance, saying:

"Continue."



"There are in southern Europe now upward of one hundred million men earning less than seventy cents per day who would gladly come here to mine coal for you."

"You interest me," said Mr. Payne, turning around in his chair so as to look the other full in the face. "Who are these people, and what are they?"

"There are some Hungarians and many millions of Poles, Slovaks, and Tyroleans, while Italy and Sicily alone hold twenty millions such as I speak of."

"Well, what do you want me to do?"

"Send me abroad to bring back five hundred on trial. They work for almost nothing; are strong as oxen, and are ignorant to the lowest degree. You can handle them like so many domestic animals."

A week later the Russian, accompanied by Albert Weeks, started for Europe to bring back men to act as mine-laborers.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

MORE than ten years succeeded that one of "the long strike"—years crowded with events for Curtis and his wife, for they were spent in foreign lands. To the great surprise of every one in Myrtle, the Company Doctor really possessed a fortune, and, a few weeks after their marriage, he and Hazle went abroad. He was a true student, and years were spent at Edinburgh, Vienna, Paris, and other centres of medical research. Then they visited India, and Japan, and islands of the Pacific that Malcolm might enlarge his knowledge of certain diseases of the eye and of leprosy. A decade slipped by thus, and they were leisurely returning to America, visiting European sections not frequented by tourists.

"What I want to do, now that your ten years' of study are over," said Hazle, "is to search untrodden paths, especially of southern Europe, so as to see the people in their homes. Let us go

far into the interior and observe for ourselves their daily life before travellers destroy their individuality."

So they did as she suggested.

It was in March that Dr. and Mrs. Curtis found themselves in the mountainous part of southern Italy. They saw thousands of people less intelligent than ordinary horses or dogs; farmers who had neither ox nor ass to haul a plough; who used pointed sticks of wood instead of spade or hoe; women who acted as beasts of burden in the fields; children who grunted, and snarled, and fought like mongrel curs. In Poland and Austria-Hungary the Americans had become heartsick over the pitiable condition of the poorer classes, but some of those in southern Italy were far worse.

"We have spent four months here in the hills of southern Italy, far removed from any city," Curtis wrote in his journal the day they left that region, "and I have never imagined such misery and degradation to be possible in a civilized land. It is our opinion that the people here are fully three centuries behind the American farmers in civilization."

By easy stages the travellers progressed, and at every turn of the road saw wretched-

ness and want. One evening just before sunset they encountered a young man lying by the ditch.

"I can't pass him by," said Hazle. "See how quiet he is. Let us stop."

They did so, and Doctor Curtis found the Italian to be in a fainting condition.

"Give me the brandy, dearest," he said. "I think this poor fellow has had a severe illness and is barely convalescent. He is exhausted."

Malcolm's skill, combined with Hazle's tenderness, revived the peasant, and soon he opened his great dark eyes and smiled. Within an hour he was strong enough to tell his story.

"Where do you come from?" asked the Company Doctor.

"From Calabria; and I'm going to America, sir."

"Indeed! To what place?"

"To Keytown, sir; and I stop at the town called New York on the way, sir. Here is my ticket from Naples."

He brought it forth and continued:

"I could have bought it from my home village to Keytown, but I wished to walk to Naples to save money."

It was one instance of hundreds which Dr.

and Mrs. Curtis had encountered. Throughout Austria-Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Sicily they had seen others like this young man bound for America. Ivan Pedroski had succeeded in his experiment a dozen years previous. Since then he had become an emigration agent for a great steamship line, and many other agents had followed his example. Everywhere they penetrated, telling of America, the promised land, where fortunes were to be obtained for the choosing; where there was no law, no king, no soldier police, no military service, and no taxes. The stream of emigration thereto had become a torrent.

Malcolm ascertained that the young Italian's name was Francesco Garchelli. Weeks previous he had been taken ill of a fever, he said, and his widowed mother and his sweetheart, Elizabetta, nursed him day and night. Of course they had no physicians, and no medicines save the ones made by themselves from herbs and roots. One night, when the fever burned Francesco's brain and boiled his blood, Elizabetta procured an herb which he must have, but it needed to be boiled. Their fire was out, their peat exhausted. She went from hut to hut to beg a fire, for matches were unheard of. At last she found a single bit of peat still smouldering.

"Oh," the girl cried, "if I only had a few twigs, I would light them and boil the herb!"

But twigs were not obtainable. The forests were Government preserves. Long ago, every splinter, every chip, had been taken from the ground, and it was a criminal offence to break so much as a branch from a tree. Broken-hearted, Elizabetta sadly went to Francesco's home and told his mother. Silently the two women wept, and at last the younger lay down to rest. In desperation, the next day the widow crept forth into the forest and hastily snapped a branch from a growing limb. Quickly she broke it into small bits, and concealing them, ran to her home. Then she borrowed the smouldering peat, and made a fire and boiled the herb. Her boy swallowed the medicine and sighed. At sunrise he was resting easier, and since had grown stronger every day.

"And then?" said Curtis.

"Ah, sir, before the sun set that evening my mother was arrested for breaking the twigs. She is now in prison, to stay until I can buy her out. I am going to America to make a fortune. When I get it I shall send it to her. She will come, and together we will work and be rich, and then Elizabetta will come to me also."

A month later Francesco Garchelli was standing, with his face against an iron grating, gazing at New York harbor. Back of him and on either side of him pressed of thousand other immigrants, all striving to get a view of the land as the great black steamer proceeded up the bay and along the North River to her pier. Far above them, on deck, were the cabin passengers; and on his bridge, above the latter, stood the ship's commander, directing the landing. A uniformed band was playing "The Star-Spangled Banner," but it meant nothing to those in the steerage. They had passed the great statue of Liberty, but knew not the meaning thereof. They saw tugs puffing ahead of heavy tows; they curiously observed schooners, and brigs, and sloops tacking hither and yon. A magnificent steam yacht sped by swift as a railway train, graceful as a greyhound. Unwieldy ferry-boats, laden to the guards, rushed back and forth between Jersey City and New York. On either shore towered buildings far, far away; tall, taller, short, slender, squatted, stretched out, in a hobbledehoy, hodgepodge manner. And at last their steamship drew up to a long wooden pier, and for an hour they sweltered between decks, while the cabin passengers disembarked leisurely,

and obtained their baggage from the customs officers. Then the steerage gates were opened and the half-civilized creatures poured out to the barge which was to convey them to Castle Garden. One old man, who had not breathed fresh air for a week, fell fainting to the deck of the barge. A sixteen-year-old mother, with her first-born (but three weeks of age), staggered down the gang-plank, sank to her knees in the sunlight, and gave up the ghost. Her little one gasped, and threw back its head, and followed her into the real Promised Land. Francesco Garchelli saw this, and with tears in his eyes prayed the Blessed Virgin to watch over his Elizabetta.

Later in the day, while yet at Castle Garden, an Italian padrone approached him, saying:

"Give me your ticket."

Francesco surrendered it and the padrone continued:

"Here, join this group and follow me. They are all going to Keytown."

Garchelli accompanied a hundred other Italians, Slovaks, and Poles, who walked back of the padrone. There were a dozen women in the company, and each of them carried a huge bundle on her head; each also carried one child or more.

The men without wives had to shoulder their own luggage, and did so, cursing their ill-luck. After a long walk through a dirty, narrow street and a trip on a ferry-boat, Francesco found himself in a room of a great brick building, from which extended an enormous shed a quarter of a mile long. Trains of cars were constantly arriving and departing, and the scene was an animated one.

There they remained, in the immigrant-room of the station at Jersey City, until half after seven in the evening. It was a long, weary period to Francesco, broken by only one interruption. This was when the padrone exchanged the peasants' Italian money into coin of the United States. The young man brought with him what corresponded to twenty-three dollars, but the padrone kept five for his commission, leaving the newcomer but eighteen. The immigrants spent that afternoon in talking or sleeping. The women kept watchful eyes upon the bundles and their babies, and the babies seemed too tired or too timid to cry. At last, however, the padrone reappeared with a railroad employee and led the others to a smoking-car which carried their kind every day, and for that reason was seldom cleaned. Many of them had never travelled by

train before, and the experience was a novel one. They went rushing on through farming lands, over bridges spanning streams, past pretty villages, and stopped now and then at some large town or important junction. Darkness had set in by the time they saw high masses of flame leaping from the chimneys of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. They rolled by the great mills and the town, and entered the Lehigh Valley. Stars were twinkling in a cloudless sky, and the curious eyes peeping through the dirty windows saw rugged mountains outlined against the dark blue dome.

The Italians were huddled in the forward part of the immigrant-car, and further back were the Poles. The Slovaks and the Tyroleans sat opposite each other near the rear. Of course the coach was crowded, but nobody grumbled except passengers from the body of the train who wanted to smoke. That pleasure was denied them, however, unless they were willing to stand in the aisle, surrounded by foreigners and their baggage, dirty and ill-smelling alike. One or two did so, and these Francesco keenly observed.

"What strange clothing they wear!" he mentally exclaimed. "Those stiff hats must be very uncomfortable." He fingered his own hat of soft felt fashioned after a round block. "And their

boots, reaching barely to their ankles, must be bad for the feet. They have no heels, either."

He looked at the long leather boots that covered his feet and legs to the knees. They had deep wrinkles at the ankles, and the heels were like those of a lady's dancing-slippers. Counterparts of his boots were worn by all the immigrants, men and women alike.

Many of the strangers couldn't understand why the curious Americans wore stiff white bands about their throats and wrists; but, with these exceptions, considered them very elegantly attired. To be sure the women they saw entering or leaving the train had odd straw baskets on their heads instead of sensible kerchiefs of gay colors, and their skirts hung to the ground. How could they ever work in the fields or vineyards thus impeded? And strangest of all, when a man and a woman walked together, the woman did not carry the bundle on her head! Actually the man held it in his hand, or under his arm. This was bad, very bad; a great mistake.

At all the stations since leaving New York and along the country roads Francesco had anxiously looked for soldier police. The steamship agent in Calabria had impressed upon him the fact that in America there were no taxes, no

compulsory military service, no laws. It was a free country, where every one did as he chose. The young Italian anxiously looked here and there for an officer, but none did he see on the journey. The nearest approach to one was at the Bethlehem station, where stood a heavily built man with a blond moustache and a kindly expression. He wore a blue coat and a white helmet, and a silver star on his left breast, and carried an odd little billy, which he held by a leathern thong. To ascertain if he really were one of the solider police, Francesco stepped from the train and hurriedly approached, pointing to the cars and saying:

"Keytown? Myrtle?"

"Si, signor, si," the officer answered, and so pleasantly that Garchelli knew he was no soldier police.

So, then, it was really true! There was no law, this was a free country. But supposing some bad men tried to steal his money? There were bad men in America; there were bad men everywhere. Why, on shipboard he had pointed out to him a man who had just served nineteen years in the galleys for murder; and he was also bound for Keytown. Francesco was glad that he brought his stiletto with him.

He fell asleep at this thought, and was awakened by a loud voice crying in the strange American tongue:

"Keytown! Change here for Myrtle! Here, get out of this, yes, all of you. Come, now, git a move on!"

The cars were standing still, and all the immigrants were in commotion. Some were picking up their bundles of clothing, others were crowding out the door. Francesco stepped into the aisle of the car, and was swept out upon the platform and thence to the ground. He stood under the station-shed with the others until all had gathered there. Then the conductor spoke to an officer at the station who was dressed like the one at Bethlehem, except that he carried a long, heavy cudgel.

"They're all for Myrtle, Mike."

"Bad cess to th' loikes av thim. Slape well!"

"Good-night," said the conductor. Then he signalled the engineer, and the cars rolled away.

As soon as they had passed the street-crossing, Policeman Mike Closkey stepped forward and beckoned the immigrants to follow. They saw the helmet, the blue uniform, the gilt buttons, and the silver star, and quickly did as he commanded. A long, ragged procession clattered

over the pavement of Keytown's principal street. The dozen women wore boots like the men, as has been remarked. Their skirts reached to the knees, their heads were covered each with a kerchief. Stays were unknown. Their garments were of coarse material, gayly colored. The men, too, wore the clothing to which they were accustomed at home. A sleepy, tired, forlorn lot they were indeed when the policeman shoved them into a large room in a wooden building which an enterprising saloon-keeper named Androskavitch had set apart as a lodging-place for immigrants. He and Closkey counted the arrivals.

"Thare do be joost wan hoondrid widout th' childer," said the policeman.

"Den your commish is jus' ten dollar. Here, Mist' Closkey, zat a gude night-work."

Androskavitch could speak half a dozen languages. He told each group of immigrants that Myrtle was but a few miles away; to go to sleep, and he would see that they reached their destination in safety in the morning.

Glad of the opportunity, Francesco Garchelli threw himself upon the floor, used his bundle for a pillow, and sank into a deep slumber.

CHAPTER II.

It was long after midnight when the immigrants lay down to rest, but many of them were up again at daylight awaiting friends or relatives who had already settled in or near Keytown. Francesco felt homesick as he saw the happy meetings. Here a Polish woman and three children sprang toward a tall, muscular man, who greeted them kindly and led them away. Next through the door entered a Slovak youth, whose heavy face lighted with pleasure as his sweetheart ran to him from a corner. He did not critically notice her boots, nor short skirt, nor muscular waist that would have reminded an American of the trunk of a sturdy young oak-tree. He wanted a woman to cook for him and take care of him, so he had sent for her and she came. While Francesco was witnessing such scenes he suddenly noticed a short, swarthy man of his own nationality.

"Camillo!" he cried, running forward.

"Garchelli? Why, so it is!" said the other.
"When did you come?"

"In the night, Camillo, and oh! I am so glad to see you! Are any others here from our village? How do you get on? What shall I do? Will you help me to find work?"

Francesco babbled on, joyously laughing, happy as a child at finding a friend in this far-off land.

"Yes, Garchelli; one or two. But have you eaten?"

"No. Come, let us have a glass of wine and some food."

They moved toward the bar, and Androskavitch's Irish bartender gave them a bottle of cheap, red wine and a loaf of bread.

"Here, let me pay for it," said Camillo.

"Ah, no! It is for me to pay."

Francesco handed one of his eighteen dollars to the bartender, who nodded and put it in the cash-till. The immigrant was aghast.

"What, so much!" cried he to his friend, and the latter nodded. Francesco lost his gay spirits at once. Then his breakfast, without spaghetti, or olive oil, or cabbage—nothing but bread and wine—had cost him all he had earned by five days' labor in the Calabrian fields.

When the repast was finished Camillo said:

"Now, tie up your bundle of clothes and we will go to get work."

Francesco started for his corner, and his friend turned to the bartender, saying quietly:

"Giva mea fift' cent, you dam rob!"

"Get out, you dhirty forayner. Oi'll t'row you out!"

Camillo was immovable.

"Giva mea fift' cent, or mea getta paper from judge, senda you Wilkesbarre prison. Data wine and bread, he costa only thirt' cent. Youa mak' Francesco pay dollera."

With a muttered oath, the bartender slyly gave Camillo a silver half-dollar, a hole in which had been filled with lead. The Italian placed the coin in his pocket without noticing the mutilation and observed:

"Gratzia, signor. Youa dam rob!"

Then Camillo called Francesco, and together they walked from Keytown to Myrtle. The road was dusty and fringed on either side by straggling groves of scrub-pine trees. Below the latter was a thick underbrush of huckleberry bushes, sassafras, and the like.

"I suppose I shall have to learn to speak American at once," said Francesco.

Camillo shook his head.

"No, not at all. Plenty of good Italians here. Americans no good. You won't have anything to do with Americans except the boss, and he can speak Italian."

"How long have you been here?"

"Two years."

"How long did it take you to get rich?"

"Oh! I'm not very rich," said Camillo, evasively.

"But you have enough to buy a vineyard at home, or a farm?"

"Oh, yes, enough for two."

"Then you are rich."

They walked on in silence for a while, until Camillo spoke:

"Francesco, you and I come from the same home village. You are a stranger here. I know everybody. You must come and live with me."

"Oh, Camillo, you are so good!"

"No, but I like you, my friend. I have a house. My woman she cooks and takes care of it. There are ten other good Italians living there. They each pay, and you pay, one dollar a month for the house."

"But that is enough for a whole year at home."

"Yes, but here money is plenty. All is expensive. You will make so much as never to

feel it. Then we all eat the same food; and when pay-day comes, each man gives me his share in money. The food will be about five dollars a month."

"Five dollars for food!"

"Yes; or say six dollars altogether each month."

This was an enormous sum to Francesco, and while he was wondering how it ever could be earned Camillo pulled from a pocket a silver watch and glanced at it.

"What is that?" said Garchelli.

Camillo explained.

"Oh, yes!" cried the other, "I saw one not long ago, only last month. I was sleeping by the roadside, when a great gentleman and a lady stopped and gave me fiery wine to drink. Then he took one from his pocket as you did. Oh, how rich you must be, Camillo!"

The latter laughed, saying:

"Next month you can have a watch yourself, Francesco."

"I!"

"Yes; why not? But wait, I have another in my pocket. Here it is, string and all. Put the string around your neck, so. There, now place the watch in your pocket. I will give it to you

for what it cost me. You pay me three dollars now, and each pay-day give me two dollars until it is all paid for."

Francesco was as happy as a child. He laughed and crowed with delight, and looked at the clumsy silver watch, turning it over and over. When Camillo showed him the whirring wheels, he was beside himself with joy, and repeated over and over again:

"Oh, if Lizabetta could see me now!"

Willingly he handed three dollars to his friend, who remarked:

"Now, each month you hand me two dollars for five months."

"Yes, I will."

Camillo had purchased the watch outright for two dollars and fifty cents the week previous.

They walked on, now and then meeting a wagon or buggy, which greatly excited Francesco's curiosity. Suddenly around a curve came the same drag Dr. Curtis had seen ten years previous, the first evening he reached Myrtle. It was drawn by two spirited horses, which were driven by a coachman in livery. On the second seat was Mrs. Payne and Albert Weeks, no longer a pale youth, but a bronzed and bearded man. As the carriage rolled by Francesco trembled and stood

still, with uncovered head and eyes glancing downward.

"Is that the queen of America?" he said.

"No, she is the woman of the big boss who died last winter. He was a dam boss."

And so Francesco proceeded toward Myrtle, meeting strange sights at every turn in the road. Of course he and Camillo spoke Italian, using Italian terms for money, houses, food, wages, and all else. As they entered the village Camillo asked:

"When do you want to go to work?"

"Now, at once."

"All right. First we will take your bundle to my house, though." He led the way to a street lined with Company houses, the same ones that Curtis saw, but far more dilapidated than they were ten years previous. Camillo stepped from the street to the sidewalk, but Francesco hesitated.

"Come on, Garchelli."

"Is it right? Will they let us walk there?"

"Certainly; come on."

Francesco did so, but felt very uncomfortable. He glanced here and there constantly; and if Mrs. Payne's drag had again come into view, nothing could have induced him to remain on the side-

walk. He was very glad when Camillo turned into a side street given over to the foreign element, and termed Shantytown.

It was all the term implied. The houses, a score on either side of the narrow, dirty street, were built of rough boards clumsily patched together, and several were of a story and a half. The others boasted but the ground floor. Many were mere huts, with ragged holes for windows, and doorways lacking doors. Pigs wallowed in certain places where slops had been thrown in the street. Bedraggled chickens wandered here and there. One or two thin, miserable cows chewed their cud in aimless fashion. The cheerlessness was depressing, the squalor disgusting. Francesco's home in Calabria was as good as any of these.

They paused before a small building of one story. It was less than ten feet high, twenty feet long, and eight feet wide. An L projected from the rear about half as large.

"This is where I live," Camillo announced. "The boss gave me the land to use, and I built this house and own it."

"Yes, but where do I and the eleven other boarders live?"

"All live here."

"Have you no home to yourself?"

"No. Why? I come here as you do, as all good Italians come, and even the miserable dogs, the Slovaks and Poles, to stay a few years and make money so as to go home again across the water, and live the rest of my days in peace. Why should I want a better home for a few years?"

"True," said Garchelli.

Camillo took him into the L, which contained a dozen rude bunks made of boards and fastened one above the other on each wall.

"There is just a single one remaining unoccupied," he said. "Place your bundle here and we will go to the boss to get you work. But first give me money. The boss asks three dollars for the job. Unless you pay it you get no work."

With great reluctance Francesco handed over the sum specified, and found that he had but eleven dollars remaining. He resolved to save every bit of this, not expending anything except for food. Thus his living was assured for two months at least.

They went back to the principal street, and Garchelli saw a few Americans around the Company Store and the Company Office, but many Europeans, some of whom were clad like himself, in clothing brought from home. Others

who had been in America for a longer period wore garments more nearly approaching those prevailing in this country; but at a glance he could distinguish an immigrant from southern Europe. Before long the two Italians approached a great wooden structure that reached a hundred feet into the air. Camillo explained that it was a breaker. After coal had been mined it was hoisted to the top of the breaker and sent through a series of screens to separate the different sizes of coal. Francesco would be one of many Italians and Slovaks who were stationed in the breaker to pick the slate from the coal. And then Camillo had to explain at length what coal was, and why it was mined.

By the time this was done they had found the man who superintended the screening and picking process. Camillo respectfully touched his round little hat, and Francesco took his off his head. Then said the former:

"Mist' Boss, this my fren' wanta work picka da slate."

"Good man, is he?"

"Vera gooda, Mist' Boss."

Camillo quietly handed the breaker superintendent two of Garchelli's dollars, but retained the other. The superintendent placed the money

in his pocket and gave Francesco a copper tag, on which was stamped the number 369. To it was attached a string, and the latter Camillo placed about his countryman's throat.

"What's his name?" said the superintendent, pulling out a notebook.

"His nama Francesco Garchelli," replied Camillo.

"Humph! That's too long."

The superintendent wrote something in his little book and put it in his pocket, saying:

"Tell him that after this his name is John Smith. He will get fifty cents a day at first, and you will show him how to work."

"Gratzia, Mist' Boss."

The superintendent hurried away, and Francesco realized that at last he was starting to make a fortune in America.

CHAPTER III.

DAY after day Francesco went to the breaker in the early morning, and stayed there until evening, excepting for an hour at noon. He and his fellow-boarders ate food which was excellent to their eyes—dry bread, spaghetti, cabbages, and tomatoes. When possible Camillo, the board-ing-boss, purchased those vegetables after they had begun to rot, for then they were cheaper. They also drank the least expensive of wines, and Garchelli soon learned to drink beer, which was bought by the keg. In the evenings he smoked, drank, and gambled with other Italians, or discussed their hated enemies, the Slovaks.*

* Between the years 1877 and 1891 strange things had happened in the anthracite regions. Previous to 1877 many of the Welsh and English and German and Scotch miners had been driven out by Irish immigrants who worked for less money. When the Long Strike was declared off hundreds of Magyars—real Hungarians—were brought to the mines by men like Ivan Pedroski, and they in turn drove out most of the Irish, who could not live in peace with the newcomers. Finally, the latter learned that free land, higher wages, and the safer occupation of farming awaited them in Kansas, Nebraska, and the other Western States. They began to migrate and, it is alleged, the operators, like Mr. Payne, sent agents abroad who

After he had been at work for six weeks he was paid for the first month's labor. He did not understand this, and demanded money for all the time he had been employed, but Paymaster Johnson's interpreter told him that the Company held back a fortnight's pay from each man in order to protect itself in case the man owed money to outsiders. The interpreter furthermore read to Garchelli the contract he had signed. The paper was written in English, and when the immigrant placed his mark thereupon he had no idea what it was; but he learned that he had assigned all his wages to Herbert Payne & Co., who could do as they chose with them. It took Francesco a long time to understand this; but

induced dirty, ignorant Slovaks to go to the mining regions. At the same time the lowest class of Italians were brought hither, and between these two has existed ever since a deadly feud. The Slovaks who have come to America in such droves, since 1883, must not be confounded with the real Hungarians, the Magyars. The former are supposed to be descended from the original tribes which dwelt in what is now Austria-Hungary before the advent of the proud, chivalrous Magyars, who overspread the land, conquering the Slovaks as Europeans took possession of America, subduing the Indians. And as far as can be ascertained, the Magyars hold the same relations to the Slovaks as do the Americans to Indians. But the Slovaks in this country are miserably ignorant, disgustingly bestial, lacking the shrewdness and cunning of red men. And Francesco soon realized that between them and his countrymen existed the feud already mentioned.

he was far more intelligent than most of the foreigners, and finally comprehended the matter. Even then he should have been paid fifty cents per day for twenty-four working days—twelve dollars in all—and his envelope contained but nine dollars! The interpreter told him that fifty cents had been retained for the Company Doctor, and twenty-five cents for the Roman Catholic priest. Furthermore, two dollars and a quarter had been deducted to pay for tobacco purchased on credit at the Company Store. However, he had saved ten of the twenty-three dollars he brought from home, and, with the nine in his envelope, felt quite rich.

As usual, the men were paid on Saturday; and after supper Camillo called his twelve boarders together and told them that their food had cost each one five dollars and fifty cents the previous month. Sums of this amount were collected from all present, together with the dollar for the month's lodging, and from Francesco two additional dollars as the second instalment on his silver watch. This left him eleven dollars and a half, most of which he hid in a corner of his trunk, meanwhile wishing he had never bought the timepiece. But Camillo would not take it back.

Shortly after dusk set in two wagons drove up to the shanty. One came from a butcher-shop and the other from a grocery at Keytown. The boarding-boss paid the drivers, and each made him a present of a small keg of beer. As the Italians lounged on the floor and in their bunks, drinking, singing, and smoking, Garchelli thought of home and Elizabetta, and his old mother in prison. How proud they would be to see him now in America earning twelve dollars a month! In Calabria he worked for what is equivalent to about twenty cents per day when he could get work, and out of this he had to pay taxes to the Government. Francesco did not love Elizabetta as would an intelligent man, but he had for her a fondness such as one of the higher animals has for his mate. He wanted her for his wife, to prepare his food, and take care of his small effects. He left the shanty and walked out upon the road to Keytown. After proceeding a short distance he met an Irish miner and his sweetheart. The Italian thought vaguely that he would like to dress his Elizabetta in a beautiful white gown such as the muslin garment worn by the Irish girl. And this was his first feeble step toward higher civilization. Thence his dull thoughts continued, and he wondered if he should ever

be a boarding-boss like Camillo, and grow rich? He was walking across a bridge at this time, and suddenly met three stalwart men, each much taller than himself. They were riotously drunk, and he knew from their dress as well as from their language that they were Slovaks. A moment later he was set upon and beaten into insensibility.

When he recovered consciousness the coppers he had in his pocket were gone, but his watch was safe. Half-crazed with fear, he stumbled over the road toward Camillo's shanty. For the first time he regretted that this was a free country; and then he remembered that as there was no law in America he could have revenge.

Camillo and his boarders were half-intoxicated when Francesco, bruised, and bleeding from a wound in his forehead, staggered into the shanty. They heard his story with delight. Here was a chance for a fight! The injured man did not know who were his assailants, but that mattered little. Camillo said the Slovaks all were dogs, anyhow, and ought to be killed or driven out of America. So he led the way to a Slovak's hut, on the outskirts of the village, facing a grove of trees. The Italians peered through the window, and then hid in the bushes.

Inside the shanty a dozen brawny Slovaks were celebrating pay-day. The boarding-boss, John Spolki, sat in a corner playing an accordion. His brother, Mike Spolki, and ten other boarders were dancing about a bucket, which rested on the dirty floor, containing polenka—a fiery intoxicant, the principal ingredients of which are wood-alcohol and cayenne pepper. None but Slovaks and Polacks can drink this stuff, but they swallowed it by the beer-glassful. One drink of it ordinarily will make an American insane.

While John Spolki drew a wailing tune from his wheezy accordion, his brother Mike led the dance. The boarders stood in a circle about the polenka-bucket, slowly moving around and around, gravely hopping first on one foot and then on the other, clapping their hands, shaking their shaggy heads, and uttering guttural notes of a weird, wild song. Every once in a while they drank polenka, and before long Mike knocked down one of his fellows. The others jumped upon him and kicked him with their heavy boots. The lantern was smashed, and the fight ended when Mike was thrown out of doors. He lay there unconscious for a few minutes, and then, rising to his feet, unsteadily walked into the grove.

As he came toward them the Italians' eyes glittered like those of wild animals. Each one pulled out a stiletto, which gleamed in the moonlight; but Camillo bade them place their weapons away. Then he handed Garchelli a stone and told him to use it.

A moment later the stone crashed down upon Mike's right eye, and throwing up his arms he sank to the ground without uttering a word.

CHAPTER IV.

It was nearly six o'clock the next Monday morning when John Spolki went out to look for his brother. John and his boarders had continued their debauch all Saturday night and all Sunday. The sun had risen on Monday before John recovered from his stupor. He picked his way through the bushes for a hundred yards, and encountered Mike's body. He turned it over with his foot, and found it stiff. Then he went back into the shanty and told his boarders, and hastened to the home of Captain Crosby, of the Coal and Iron Police. The latter telephoned the news to the deputy coroner at Keytown, who empanelled his jurors and brought them to Myrtle a couple of hours later.

In the mean time Captain Crosby had taken Mike's body to a barn, and there it lay on the floor, stripped to the waist. The powerful arms were stiffened; the deep, hairy chest, and the throat were bloated. Froth gurgled from the thick lips and coarse nostrils. The eyes were staring upward, and over the right was distinctly

seen the wound caused by Francesco's stone; but of the onset made by the Italians the jurors knew nothing, nor did John Spolki, nor his boarders.

Rain had fallen all night, and the jury sat in a small outbuilding, at Coroner's Casey's suggestion. And Foreman McCarthy questioned Captain Crosby, who told what he knew.

"Swear John Spolki," the foreman commanded.

John stepped forward, dressed in his best clothes.

"He can't speak English," said Crosby, "but I have an interpreter here."

The interpreter, a Hungarian, could translate from Magyar to English, but he did not understand the Slavic dialect spoken by Spolki. So Foreman McCarthy sent Captain Crosby for another interpreter, and asked where were John's boarders, adding that he wanted to examine them. Crosby said he had notified them, and that they were in their shanty dressing in their best garments.

While the Coal and Iron policeman went to obtain a second interpreter the jurors looked out the small window at the heavy rain, and talked politics with Coroner Casey. This official kept a saloon at Keytown, and was a tall, thin Irishman of fifty-odd years. His face was clean-shaven,

and on official occasions such as this he wore an enormous pair of spectacles, a blue frock coat, and a black stock. Within half an hour Spolki's boarders had arrived, and Captain Crosby returned with his man.

"Now, bhoys," said Casey, "youse have took a sollem oath to do your juty, an' Oi hope youse wull do ut. Yez nadent' fear but phwat aich av youse will get th' dhollar-n'-a-half fee for jury juty; an' besides that Oi intind to roon for coroner agin in th' fahll, an' Oi wahnt a joost var-dict on that account.'

"Swear the interpreter," said the foreman. When this was done, he glanced at John Spolki and his boarders, who stood at the door.

"Take off your hats, you!" he exclaimed, and the interpreters translated it to the abashed Slovaks.

Then the boarding-boss was sworn. His words were translated from the Slavic dialect into Hungarian by one intepreter, and then into English by the Magyar, and this was done in the case of the other witnesses. They all told the same story. They had been drinking and had got into a fight. Mike had the worst of it, and was thrown out of the shanty. They admitted that in going out his head struck the door-

post, and they supposed that was the cause of the wound over his right eye.

"Now, John," said the foreman, "have you and your brother been friendly?"

"He is not my brother," said John.

"Not your brother! Why, all the witnesses say so."

John turned to his boarders and uttered several exclamatory sentences.

"Shut the mon up," said Coroner Casey to the interpreters. "Tell him to kape a shtill tongue wagging in his mouth, or Oi'll sind him to jail."

The interpreter did so, but several minutes elapsed before Spolki could be quieted. Then he testified again, stoutly denying the relationship which really existed.

He, and the Slovaks generally, believe this saying—"Dead man no good; save the living." If he admitted that Mike was his brother, he would have to pay ten dollars to bury him and in the mean time the body would lie in his house and all the boarders would leave. He had no idea of the nature of an oath, and preferred to let the county authorities do as they chose with his brother's body.

The jurors were not surprised. This was a

common occurrence. Finally they dismissed all but the Coroner, and discussed the case. Outside the rain was falling heavily. Trees cried, pitifully shedding millions of tears from their leaves. The wind swept about in fitful gusts. The ground was soggy, and the jurors were uncomfortable, and wanted to conclude the inquest, but an interruption occurred. Suddenly the door was thrown open, and by it stood an Italian dripping with blood. He had been handling dynamite ignorantly and an explosion had followed. Foreman McCarthy looked at him for an instant, and exclaimed:

"What in hell do you want here? This is a coroner's inquest. Clear out, and come back when you are dead!"

The wounded foreigner staggered away, and the discussion was resumed.

"Oi tell you phwat, bhoys," said Casey, "th' ded mon is only a domd Hunk anyhow, an' wese don't want to saddle the county wid th' ixpinse av a muhrder thrial. Oi think th' payple wud be bhetther satsified wid a vardict accordin'."

The deputy coroner glanced meaningly at the jurors, who nodded approvingly. Five minutes later they rendered a verdict that Mike Spolki

came to his death through alcoholism. That afternoon a Keytown undertaker shipped the body to a medical school in Philadelphia, and the next week received ten dollars, and a small sum to cover expenses.

CHAPTER V.

A FEW evenings after the inquest over the death of Mike Spolki, Herbert Payne's daughter, now the wife of Albert Weeks, sat in the Holland House, New York, reading *The Mail and Express*; and while glancing through that column wherein "Passe Partout" cleverly records the doings of fashions, she uttered an exclamation:

"Why, Albert, listen to this: 'Doctor and Mrs. Malcolm Curtis have returned after ten years' absence in Europe and the far East. They are visiting at the Curtis' town house in Fiftieth Street.'"

Mrs. Weeks let the paper drop to her lap, and added:

"We must call upon them at once and welcome them home."

"I can remember when you didn't seem anxious to cultivate her acquaintance," rejoined Weeks, with a smile.

"You know how it is perfectly well. Hazle Johnson was nothing and nobody. The wife of Malcolm Curtis has a position worth anything.

If we only had had an idea of his real station and wealth!"

Weeks's eyes flashed, and his lips were drawn firmly. Gertrude turned to his side and kissed his forehead, saying:

"There, dear, now don't be foolish. You know I never could have cared a snap for Doctor Curtis; but you also know that for years I have been trying to get into New York society. Every winter we have come down here, and I have failed when his family could have fixed things perfectly."

Then she kissed him again, and smoothed the severe, deep lines from his brow.

"That's all right, Gertrude; but you know how I feel about you. Never mind, we'll call upon them this evening."

They reached the Curtis home after a late dinner, and were graciously received.

"Eight years of married life seem to have agreed with you, Weeks," said Malcolm.

"Yes, I've gained nearly ninety pounds since then, not counting my beard."

"And I would be as heavy," said Gertrude, "if it wasn't for running about after my two boys. That is sufficient exercise for any one. Albert takes life easy, sitting in his office all day. You

know he has been superintendent of the colliery since papa died last year?"

"Yes," replied Hazle, "mother wrote me of it. How did my father seem when you saw him last?"

"We are all afraid he is failing in health, dear." Gertrude took one of Hazle's hands, looking at her sympathetically, and adding: "I am so glad you are home again. Will you go to Myrtle soon?"

"To-morrow evening. Indeed we came back for that purpose. Mother's last letter suggested that we had better return, and we started at once."

"That is good," Hazle observed. "We, too, are going up on that train."

Her husband looked at her with surprise, but she bade him be still by a glance.

"I suppose things are about the same at the colliery?" Curtis suggested, turning to Weeks.

"No, you will find many changes. Most of the old miners—the Irish, German, Scotch, and English—have moved away. There are few white men left. Nearly all the miners inside and out are foreigners now."

"What do you mean by foreigners?"

"Oh, the Hunks and Hikes, as they are called.

They're really Hungarians and Italians; but up in the coal regions they are called Hunks and Hikes. People class them, and the Poles, and the Tyroleans as 'foreigners,' alluding to the old hands as 'white men.' We have a few Arabs too, and one or two Turks, and Egyptians, and Russian Jews; but in nearly every case these fellows are peddlers. Yes, you'll find many changes."

"Who is the Company Doctor now?"

"His name is Scott, and I'm afraid we shall lose him soon. He wants to get away, and I'm on the lookout for a suitable man."

While the men talked of these and kindred subjects, their wives kept up a lively conversation regarding matters personally interesting to them.

"By the bye," said Curtis, after a pause, "I often have thought of old Gottlieb Schmidt, who gave the men credit for everything in his store during the Long Strike. Did he make a success of that sociological experiment?"

"Hardly. He failed, and was sold out of house and home. He hasn't saved a cent in all these years. Not one of the men even tried seriously to pay him, so far as I know. Then there was Editor Jim McManus, who fought in his paper

for the men—always took their side even when he knew that such action kept from him all Company printing. Do you remember him?”

“Very well indeed.”

“Well, he advised the men to stop the strike two weeks before the Hawkeyes crushed it. The men accused McManus of having sold out to the Company. They stopped their subscriptions and organized a boycott, so that the paper gradually ran down hill, and suspended within ten months. That’s the way they treated the man who served them for years and years with all his intelligence and means.”

“And Pat Burney—what became of him?”

“Why, he owns a prosperous saloon on the road to Keytown. How he got the money to start it nobody knows; but start it he did a few weeks after the Long Strike was broken. He even bought the house and land, too.”

Weeks and Curtis never knew where the money came from. As a matter of fact, however, Patrick Burney had been engaged to go from the Lower to the Middle Coal-Fields for the express purpose of organizing a strike which would and did shut down the mines there for months. This caused the operators in the Upper and the Lower Fields to increase their production and

run their mines full time, for the market had to be supplied. Patrick received several thousand dollars for this work.

The Superintendent and his wife, and Dr. and Mrs. Curtis, left New York for Myrtle the following evening. It was a long, dreary journey, for no parlor car was attached to the train. Past Bound Brook, and Flemington, and Easton, and Bethlehem they went, and at Mauch Chunk another conductor took charge of the train. He recognized Malcolm immediately, for he had been one of the engineers in charge of Slope No. 4 in the old days, and he knew Hazle even better. After greeting them he observed:

"You'll find many changes, Doctor."

"So I hear."

Then Superintendent Weeks spoke:

"Have you any immigrants aboard?"

"About fifty—forward in the smoker."

"Would you like to step in there and see what kind of cattle Europe is sending us?" Albert asked Malcolm.

"Indeed I would."

They went toward the smoking-car, and as the door was opened a wave of foul air rushed out. The coach was dimly lighted by a few lamps. Peanut shells were strewn over the floor and

were ground into the dirt thereupon. Two or three commercial travellers sat in a corner smoking and telling stories, but the remainder of the seats were occupied by men, women, and children from Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Poland. Most of them were dressed in their native costumes, and had great bundles of clothing piled on the floor. Others wore American hats and shoes, having returned to this country after living abroad during the winter upon their savings of the previous warm season.

While Curtis was curiously inspecting them the conductor reappeared.

"Every one of those fellows who were here last year," he said, "owns a silver watch. If you want to see what ignorant apes they are, just keep your eye on me."

He walked toward the middle of the car and gravely inspected a circular thermometer fastened above a window. He took out his watch and compared the two. Then he stepped into the baggage-coach.

Hardly had the door closed when four of the returning mine-laborers walked to that thermometer and looked at it and at their watches. Two set their time-pieces anew and then resumed their seats.

"That is funny," said Curtis, smiling in spite of himself; "but what hopeless ignorance!"

"Yes," replied Weeks; "but we couldn't run the mines without these people. Competition has reduced prices to such an extent that no operator could pay the wages current in the old days when you were at Myrtle as Company Doctor."

CHAPTER VI.

A FORTNIGHT passed and Hazle was recovering from the first shock of her bereavement. She had reached home a few days before her father died, but now he had been buried a week. Her mother, prostrated by the event, was unable to move from her bed. Malcolm said that a month might elapse before she could go out of doors. In the mean time Scott, the Company Doctor, left, and his work was being done temporarily by Curtis.

One evening after supper the latter and his wife went driving, and on the road to Keytown passed a gang of ten Italians in charge of constables. The occupants of the carriage did not know who the prisoners were, but as a matter of fact they were Camillo, the boarding-boss, and nine of his boarders. That afternoon a wagon belonging to a Keytown grocer had halted before Camillo's shanty and the driver had gone inside to make a collection. When he came out a ten-pound box of macaroni had disappeared. The driver hurried to Keytown and swore out a war-

rant before a justice of the peace for the arrest of Camillo and twelve others, who were designated in the paper as "John's Dose." Three constables arrested ten of them, the others escaping; and among those captured was Francesco Garchelli, who did not know what was the matter, but believed it to be serious. He was thoroughly alarmed. All that he owned were seven dollars and the silver watch. Had he dared, he would have tried to elude the officers; but well he knew that constables and police in the anthracite fields deal promptly with foreigners. Failure to obey would bring a club or a blackjack crashing down upon his skull. Resistance would mean the crack of a revolver.*

Francesco had not recovered from his fright when he and the other prisoners arrived at the office of a justice of the peace. It was a plainly furnished room, twenty feet long and seven wide. Along either wall was a rough bench; in the centre a rusty stove. The Justice—ah, what

* When an Italian is arrested in an anthracite patch the police search him on the spot, and usually find a keen, gleaming blade concealed in a pocket frequently made in the waistcoat just below the back of the neck. In the case of Italian women and girls the weapons are hidden in bootlegs or stockings. The Coal and Iron Police know that the Italian mine laborers are as treacherous as panthers, and take precautions accordingly.

a burlesque to call him that!—sat back of a desk at the further end of the room.

He heard the grocer's complaint, and after examining Camillo through an interpreter decided that he and his nine boarders were equally guilty. He decided, furthermore, that they must each pay the grocer two dollars to reimburse him for the loss of his macaroni and for his trouble, adding:

"And you are each fined ten extra dollars for costs."

One by one the Italians stepped up to the big desk, thereupon depositing two dollars for the grocer and ten for the justice, until one hundred and eight lay in a heap. Then Francesco, with trembling anxiety, explained that all the money he owned on earth was seven dollars. These he placed on the pile of bank-notes extorted from the others, but the officers compelled him also to put there the watch. At this Camillo objected, crying:

"It's my watch, not his; he hasn't paid for it yet!"

"Tell him to shut up or I'll send him to jail," said the Justice to the interpreter, continuing, "He can settle his row with the other Hike outside. Tell 'em to clear out, now."

Camillo's face grew black with anger as he heard this. Then he followed his fellows through the door to the street.

Two hours later Malcolm and Hazle were returning from Keytown to Myrtle, when they nearly drove over a man lying in the road.

"Drunken miner," observed Curtis, guiding his horse around the body.

"You're not going to leave him there, dear, are you? He will surely be under some one's wheels before daylight."

"Well, what can we do?"

"Why, the least is to pull him to the side of the road."

Curtis stepped from his vehicle and caught hold of the man's collar, shaking him.

"Here, wake up!" he exclaimed.

Then he glanced at his fingers. They were damp. Hastily he struck a match.

"This fellow's hurt, Hazle. Hurry home and send the ambulance."

"Badly hurt?"

"I cannot tell. His hair is matted with blood."

She spoke to the horse and whirled out of sight. On she went through the darkness, and had reached the village outskirts when the roadster sprang into the air, lifting two wheels from

their tracks. The Doctor's wife saw a man jump for the bit, missing it, and felt the wheels jolt over him as he dropped beneath them. His curses and those of his companions rang in her ears. Then she went madly careening down the steep hill that leads to Myrtle.

Weeks and his wife told Hazle the next day that she never must drive about the country roads after dark unless accompanied by an escort.

"Of course there is no danger in the villages," the Superintendent added, "but one can never tell what these Hunks and Hikes will do on a lonely road."

"What are those names?" asked Hazle.

"Why, we call Hungarians 'Hunks,' and Italians 'Hikes.' I don't know the reason."

"It is all so strange, after having gone everywhere alone before the Doctor and I were married. I can't understand the change."

"No, but you soon will."

The Superintendent did not desire to prolong the subject. He realized the injury which had been inflicted on the community when the miserable people from southern Europe were brought to the mines. He knew they had driven away ninety per cent. of the old residents—the Amer-

icans, Irish, Scotch, English, Welsh, and Germans; but he also knew that they would work for sixty, eighty, ninety cents a day, and that they would never dare to rebel and institute a strike.

The following day, when Curtis ascertained that Francesco Garchelli was the man he had come so near running over, he was greatly surprised, and of course Hazle's sympathies were strongly stirred. The Italian was installed in the barn back of her mother's house, and there he lay in a cot in a dangerous condition many days, for his was an ugly fracture. The only nurse the village boasted—Pat Burney's little daughter, now grown to young womanhood—was called upon, and she performed her duty faithfully, trying to forget Francesco's nationality; but when she failed in this, inwardly cursing him, with a large assortment of Celtic profanity.

While he lay in a stupor, there came a letter for him from abroad; and Curtis had it interpreted. It was sent by a priest, who wrote it at Elizabetta's solicitation, and told him how she loved him and longed to see him; how lonely she was, but how prayerful for his safety, and that his mother had died in prison.

"Poor little woman!" Hazel exclaimed as the

translator finished. "Doctor, we'll send for her."

And this was done.

A series of fortunate happenings caused the fracture to unite, and Francesco was progressing satisfactorily, when he was stricken with typhoid fever. While his life was hanging by a thread Elizabetta arrived, a graceful, black-haired girl of sixteen. Upon being told that Hazle had sent for her to come, she fell upon her knees, kissing the hem of the other's gown, while tears burst in a glad shower from her dark eyes.

Two months afterward an attempt was made to convict Camillo of assaulting Garchelli. The Company Doctor acting for his protégé, prosecuted the case and established a complete chain of evidence; but the defendant brought twelve witnesses who swore that he had been with them at Keytown all night, after the trial brought about by the grocer, and that he did not start for Myrtle until daylight.

As they left the Justice's office together Curtis said to Captain Crosby, of the Coal and Iron police:

"I am sure those men committed perjury."

"So am I, but there's no use in doing anything. They all help each other. There's a regular un-

derstanding among them—a sort of beneficial club.”

“You don’t mean a society for mutual protection?”

“Yes, I do,” said Captain Crosby. “Of all the Italians tried in this region ninety-nine per cent are released upon the payment of fines; and the strange thing is, that one or two Italians, leaders of the others, pay almost all the fines. Why, a feller from the New York *Herald* was here a while ago, and showed up the organization.”

“Haven’t the authorities done anything about it?”

“No. Why should they? There’s no money in it for them. They don’t care about these dirty foreigners killing each other.”

The Company Doctor was not prepared to believe that this opinion prevailed, but before he had been at Myrtle six months he knew that it did; for he remained there, at first, because Hazle did not wish her mother moved until her health had fully returned.

When Garchelli was strong enough to work he did not go back to the mines. Instead, Malcolm had him taught to care for a horse and installed him in the barn. Elizabetta was employed to wait upon Mrs. Johnson, and all went well with

them. Soon came the wedding-day, and they received fifty dollars from their benefactors, who suggested that a little journey be taken with it; but the young couple put the money away as the basis of a sum with which to purchase a home of their own.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM the day he resumed the work of Company Doctor, Curtis was intensely interested in the state of affairs he found.

"This is a phase of our sociological problem of the utmost importance," he repeated to Hazle, again and again. "It is an abnormal condition, and the men responsible for it are little less than criminals. The ignorance, filth, and viciousness of those Poles, Italians, Sicilians, Tyroleans, Bohemians, and Slovaks are absolutely appalling."

"You forget Francesco and Elizabetta," she observed.

"No, I don't, dear. There are a number like them, of each nationality, who will become good Americans, who intend to live here always, who are working for their own homes; but the vast majority are cattle."

His wife did not dispute it. The previous day she had visited a shanty wherein lay seven Slovaks who had been more or less injured by an explosion of dynamite. So low were they in the

scale of humanity that not one had the decency to cover himself with bedclothing as she entered.

"Twenty years ago," Malcolm continued, earnestly, "an Italian, for example, was a novelty in the streets of any American city other than New York, while immigrants from Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Poland were practically unknown. To-day they build the railroads of the whole land. They are spreading out through the farming country. There are immense colonies of them in the Western States living by themselves, never mingling with Americans, teaching their children no English, and caring nothing about our institutions. It is the gravest question this nation has to face, that of immigration. Then, while you, and your mother, and mine have no voice in affairs of government, almost all of these miserable aliens working here cast their votes."

The Doctor went from his lunch-table that day on a hurry call, to attend John Spolki's wife. When he left their shanty she and the child were doing well. He called twenty-four hours later and found the babe asleep in a bunk. Mrs. Spolki was hard at work preparing dinner for thirteen boarders. Curtis had seen and studied the people of many climes, but this exhibition

of strength amazed him. Later, however, he learned that it is not uncommon for a Slavic or Polish woman to give birth to a child one day and perform her usual household duties the next. Months afterward he became accustomed to the sight of such women standing ankle-deep in snow, wearing neither shoes nor stockings; and before the winter was over he did not marvel to see barefoot Italian children playing upon the ice. They did not suffer, and their parents would not countenance the injury that would be done shoeleather by getting it wet in the deep snow. The Company Doctor learned subsequently that even in the summer-time, when women and children picked berries, they seldom wore shoes in the heavy, rough woods, which might scar and tear them. Instead, they took off their foot-covering upon entering a grove and put it on again when they reappeared in the highway.

As a medical man, Malcolm was enthusiastic over such splendid physiques and powers of endurance. If these immigrants could be assimilated by our people, he reasoned, in the near future Americans would surpass any other civilized nation. Not merely were the foreigners apparently insensible to the rigors of January,

but they worked all day long in July weather out of doors, when Americans, Irishmen, and Germans could not by any possibility withstand the terrible heat. They seemed to be made of iron. He spoke of this to a Magyar priest, who had a church in Keytown.

"Ah!" said Father Androskowsky, "you don't know the Slovaks. For hundreds of years they have worked on farms, the women acting in place of oxen at the plough, the men doing labor that would tax the energies of a well-bred horse. That is one reason why the women are so discontented here. You Americans forbid them to work in the mines, and will not even let them shovel coal into the cars. That is bad, very bad for them. They are miserable in consequence, especially as they have no farms whereupon to break stones, dig up stumps, or till the soil. The Slovak and Polish women would delight in such work, but they cannot perform it here."

They conversed further upon the subject, and finally Curtis asked the priest what he thought would be the effect of allowing such hosts to come from southern Europe and settle down in America. The clergyman's reply surprised him.

"What I think is this: it is the most dangerous thing your country has ever done. Look at these

people—you go out among them, you attend them in their homes. They are miserable, wretched, ignorant. See how they live, huddled in shanties; look at the horrid food they eat; consider their disregard for human life. I tell you, sir, America is opening her arms to the lowest class of people in Europe. I am a Magyar, but I am not blind. The immigrants coming to the United States in such droves are of the vast, uncontrollable hordes who live in the mountain fastnesses abroad, far removed from centres of civilization."

The aged priest paused for a moment, and then concluded:

"If Austria-Hungary, and Poland, and Italy considered these people desirable, do you imagine for an instant that those governments would allow them to leave the countries, especially when every man is needed for the war which has threatened during the last ten years? No, sir!

"When emigration agents first worked abroad, a superior class of people came hither from southern Europe. I know of many who came then. But since about the year 1880, when I came, they have steadily decreased in the scale of humanity. A great majority of those who have come here in the last few years, according

to a careful estimate, are at least a century behind Americans in their ideas of life—as to food, clothing, wages, and so on. The Italians, as a rule, I believe to be three centuries behind Americans in civilization. I was born a Magyar, sir, but now I am an American; and I pray daily that our Government will shut down on this increasing stream through Ellis Island. . . . How many people are there in America of all nationalities?” he suddenly asked.

“Why,” replied Curtis, “I think the census of 1890 gave our population as being in the neighborhood of sixty millions.”

Father Androskowsky shook his head.

“Let us leave out the multitudes of Tyroleans, Bohemians, Slovaks, Poles, Russians, and Arabs,” he finally said. “Without any of these, Italy alone has thirty millions of people; and of these, I am sure that twenty millions dream, hope, scheme, plan, to emigrate to America some day. Do not misunderstand me,” he continued in earnest tones. “My heart bleeds for these poor people, but I realize that not even the Constitution left by Washington can withstand the unchecked tide carrying hither the scum of the continent.

“Last year, I am told, seventy thousand Ital-

ians landed here. I venture to say that not over one thousand came intending to remain permanently, to learn the language, to become citizens and do their best to support the State. Six times have I crossed the ocean in the steerage, and never without having had pointed out to me one man or more who was a criminal. I have seen it suggested," the priest added significantly, "that hundreds of prisoners are released every year by European Governments with the tacit understanding that they start at once for America and not return to their native lands to reside permanently. Do I surprise you?"

"Yes, you do," Curtis admitted.

"Well, by asking any other Americanized priest of my experience you will hear the same words."

And this surprised Malcolm the more; but later he found it to be true.

Naturally his enthusiasm, as a medical man, for amalgamating the brawn of the immigrants with the intelligence of Americans was dampened, and he gave up the plan of producing thus, in the future, an ideal generation.

Father Androskowsky's words, that most of the people recently arriving from southern Europe were centuries behind the Americans in

civilization, were brought back to the Company Doctor with emphasis one evening the following week, when he met Captain Crosby, who was driving toward Keytown.

"Busy to-night?" asked the officer.

"No," said Malcolm. "Why?"

"Get in the buggy here, and I'll tell you as we go along. There's one of these damned Hunks over in Shantytown there called Gargok, or some such heathen name. Well, two weeks ago his wife smashed her finger in a door. The next day somebody stole ten dollars out of his trunk. Four or five days later his cow took sick and gave only about half as much milk as usual. Then Gargok and his friends consulted together and decided that somebody was witching him.

"At first," continued Captain Crosby, "they couldn't think of no witch hereabouts in Myrtle; but all at once several of them called to mind a young Polander, Mary Josky, who came here last month to meet and marry her lover, which she did. For some reason the women Hunks are down on her. I reckon it's because she's good-looking—hain't wore herself out yet by bringing up an army of brats. Anyhow it got noised around that she is the daughter of a shepherd in the old country—and you know these Hunks

believe that all witches are daughters of shepherds. That was enough to arouse Gargok, and when he heard that she was the seventh daughter and had been seen swallowing fire, one time, at midnight, he knew she was the one that had bewitched him."

As the Coal and Iron policeman spoke thus, Curtis listened with amazement.

"Do you really mean that people living here, within five hours' journey of New York, believe in witches?" he said.

"Do I mean it?" Crosby echoed. "Well, I should say so. Nine-tenths of these Hunks and Hikes believe in witches a damn-sight stronger than you believe in quinine."

"But how long has this one—what do you call him—Gargok? How long has he been here?"

"He came to America the first time about six years ago; but like nearly all of them, he spends each winter at home, living there on the money saved here. But where was I in the story? Oh! yes. Gargok believed her to be the witch. So he went to her and says, 'Mary Josky, stop witchin' my cow and make her well again, so she give more milk?' The woman swore that she wasn't a witch, but it did no good; he wouldn't believe her.

"Last night Gargok's cow died. He went again to her and said that if she didn't witch the cow back to life by this morning, he would kill her. That scared Mary. She didn't know what to do. But late in the afternoon she was told by Gargok's wife that he and his friends were going to burn her up in her shanty—that being the only way to kill a witch. So Mary ran over to Keytown and told her story to somebody who sent her to a justice of the peace. I arrested Gargok just before supper and he seemed surprised. He admitted that the woman told the truth, and said he ought not to be arrested. He offered to prove in court that she's a witch, and I'm going to the hearing now."

The Justice of the Peace did not permit Gargok to prove that Mary Josky was a witch. He fined each of them ten dollars, however, and told the man that if he raised any more trouble he would have to go to jail.

CHAPTER VIII.

EVER since Elizabetta and Francesco were taken into Doctor Curtis' household Hazle realized that she had before her home-missionary work of the most practical order. So, after the supper-dishes were washed each evening, Garchelli and his bride came into their benefactress' sitting-room, and for an hour received a lesson in the English language. To her delight, Hazle ascertained that both could read in Italian, thus making the task much easier, and before the winter was over she found herself able to converse somewhat in their tongue.

In the beginning, however, Francesco saw no reason for the daily lesson. He had decided to remain in America, instead of going home as soon as he had laid up eight hundred or a thousand dollars. But even then he could not understand why it was important for him to be able to speak English.

"Plenty of Italians have been here ten years," he said to Hazle, "and know not your language. They have no trouble; they get along all right."

"But those poor people are not Americans," she replied. "Do they ever go out among Americans for friends? Do they go to an American church? Do they read American papers?"

"No. Why should they? They have plenty of Italian friends. The Italian priest has a church here, and he has Italian papers. What do we want to know Americans for, or learn their ways?"

That night it looked to Hazle like a hopeless task. But she persevered, and was rewarded unexpectedly.

One day Francesco drove the Doctor's horse out for exercise. The young man wore a suit of American clothing given to him by Malcolm, and looked very well. On the road he met Camillo, whom he had not seen for nearly two months, and asked if he were well. The boarding-boss touched his little round hat respectfully and replied:

"Si, signor."

To say that Garchelli was surprised would not do him justice. What had come over the proud, rich Camillo, of whom he had stood in awe, but who now was so humble? He stopped the horse and turned to look at the bent, awkward figure retreating with shambling gait in a cloud of dust.

Camillo's dirty face, and unkempt, greasy hair, and uncouth boots—in short, his general appearance of filthy misery caused Francesco to utter an exclamation. Then he glanced at his own clothing, so trim, and neat, and well kept.

"Camillo thinks I now am an American!" he cried, half-aloud.

This thought was uppermost all during the drive, and he made haste to tell Elizabetta of the adventure when he returned. The proud little bride was even happier. The occurrence opened to her woman's imagination a career of which she had never before even dreamed.

"Oh! my Francesco," she cried, "let us really be Americans, as are the good Doctor and his wife."

From that night they worked like beavers, making progress that delighted no more than surprised Hazle, who used as a text-book the New Testament, but, to her grief, found that her pupils were almost pagans so far as knowledge of the Gospel was concerned. But then another strange thing happened. As soon as Francesco grasped the meaning of Christ's love, as soon as he fully understood what was the salvation freely offered, he was anxious to carry the news to his fellow Italians.

When Hazle gladly told her husband, he said thoughtfully:

“Human nature has changed little in nineteen centuries. Here we see history repeating itself.”

The Company Doctor's income enabled Hazle to do much to help the poor immigrants in a few months. She started a night-school for men, at which Francesco presided, and another for girls and women wherein she and Elizabetta taught both English and sewing. After these had been in operation for a year, each had about thirty pupils. But it was very difficult to induce more than this number to attend. Others who were invited did not want to come, saying they had no use for the language; they were going home to live, anyhow, as soon as they could make a little money, and meanwhile they couldn't spare the time.

During that winter Hazle induced half a dozen Italians to go to her church; but as they never bathed, their bodies exhaled odors so foul that regular church attendants could not sit near them. Then she paid half the expense of procuring the services of an Italian missionary, who established himself in the schoolhouse and began work in earnest.

CHAPTER IX.

THUS week after week slipped by, and both Malcolm and Hazle became more and more absorbed in their new work—she finding vent therein for the charitable, helpful disposition first made known to the Company Doctor the night they met at the sick-bed of Pat Burney's wife, and he as a sociological student. Curtis had never cared particularly for urban life, and was not loath to stay in Myrtle for a time, and his wife declared that she felt it her vocation to devote herself to bettering the condition of the immigrants; therefore they remained.

One day Hazle and Gertrude started for Key-town by train. They had several minutes to wait at the station, and the Company Doctor's wife was about to enter the door thereof when the other stopped her, saying:

"Surely you're not going in!"

"Why not?"

"Look through the window and see."

Hazle did so. The waiting-room of the station was filled with immigrants, who occupied all the

seats and much of the floor. Closer inspection showed them to be dirty, the women appearing as repulsive as the men, and the children worse than either. Several were intoxicated. The majority were eating peanuts (shells of which littered the floor), while greasy, filthy babies were sucking orange or banana skins. In a few moments the door was opened and a flood of air swept out, so nauseating that Hazle turned pale.

"Now you see why we do not wait in railroad stations up in this country except in the larger towns," said Gertrude. "That which you saw was a reason good enough. But you failed to see, through the window, that the seats and walls are overrun with vermin, and of course you couldn't detect the germs of loathsome disease with which several of that crowd probably are affected."

The train came along just then and the two entered a coach. A dozen immigrants also stepped into it, the others going into the smoking-car. Among the latter were four Tyroleans just drunk enough to be ugly. When half-way to Keytown they began to fight, and succeeded in locking the conductor and brakemen outside on the platforms. The train was stopped, and the entire crew battered in one door. Then

ensued a hand-to-hand fight, in which the railroad men vigorously wielded steel wrenches and iron bars taken from the locomotive's tool-chest. After a short, sharp struggle the drunken foreigners were conquered. Two surrendered, and the others were tightly bound with straps borrowed temporarily from a couple of trunks in the baggage-car. Then the train proceeded.

This adventure terrified Hazle, but did not alarm Gertrude, who had passed through a somewhat similar experience the year previous.

Malcolm, however, looked grave when he heard of it.

"I see that we must be even more careful than in the past," he said. Then he paced the floor several times, at last exclaiming: "Is Congress mad in allowing these hosts to swarm over the land like the Huns of old? Since you went to Keytown I was called to the valley to patch up a dozen who were wounded at a christening. The child baptized was of Polish parentage, and the ceremony occurred three days ago; and ever since, according to their custom, relatives and friends have been celebrating by feasting, dancing, drinking. Usually such a programme lasts for a week after a christening or a wedding, I am told; but this time the crowd got

drunk enough to fight in sixty hours. Some of the old miners in the valley, whom I knew years ago, tell me it was pandemonium let loose.

"While the Poles were fighting among themselves they were set upon by a band of Italians, for no particular reason, apparently, except that they keep up a race-war. Their yells were dreadful, resounding through the valley like demons' shouts. Then women and children joined in the mêlée, and when darkness stopped the battle the participants carried off their wounded. Nine were severely hurt, and three may die. One man was beyond relief when I left there."

"Where were the Coal and Iron Police?" Hazle asked.

"Miles away on another errand. I understand that each of the seven officers in this vicinity has to keep in order about two thousand foreigners. You see it is no easy task."

"I should think not." Hazle was thinking of her efforts in the schoolhouse. Soon she asked:

"Why do you suppose these men fight so often and so fiercely?"

"I don't know, dearest. It's a hard matter, and I have studied it faithfully for months without reaching a satisfactory conclusion. What I

believe is that they fight as do wild beasts, for the love of it. They seem hardly human—you know that is so in the great majority of cases. Then, as the intelligent immigrants tell me, nearly all of this mass are socialists or worse, who believe that this, a free country, possesses no law. It is amazing to realize that they hold this belief, but I accept the fact.

"You know what Father Androskowsky has told me so often? Well, the few good foreigners here—the shoemakers, the grocers, the merchants, and the two physicians—agree with him. These are men worthy of receiving the benefit of American citizenship, and all of their kind ought to be welcomed. But they unite in deploring the oncoming rush of the rabble, who are overspreading the land. They know how thickly populated southern Europe is with just such vicious, ignorant, uncivilized people, and more than any American do they fear the result of unchecked immigration."

"But it seems so cruel, so pitiful," she urged, "to shut our gates to these poor creatures! Their one hope in life, it seems to me, is in coming to America."

"That is true, dear; and yet had we kept them out, Chicago would not have had cause for erect-

ing a Haymarket monument to murdered policemen."

That which struck Curtis most forcibly, of all the strange conditions he found, was the apathy of the older residents of the region regarding the acts of violence done by immigrants. The business men of Myrtle and Keytown, even the officers of justice and certain of the clergy, apparently cared little what became of the foreign element.

"It is seldom they attack white men," a member of the municipal council said to him, "and we don't care how much fighting they do among themselves. If they'd only kill each other all off, this region would be well rid of them."

One day a Keytown physician, while discussing the question with Curtis, remarked:

"It's curious to me that some of the New York papers don't roast the authorities of this county. Now, I alone have testified as an expert in seventeen murder cases. In none of them was the criminal brought to justice. I'll make a rough guess that in the last ten years a hundred and fifty murders have been committed by foreigners in the anthracite fields, and that not a dozen convictions followed."

"But what is the reason?" Malcolm asked.
"Surely there must be one."

"Oh! the people, except in rare instances, don't care. I never saw such disregard for human life as exists here. If white men were murdered, it would be different. You see a murder trial costs a lot of money, and the courts here as a rule are months and months behind-hand in such cases."

"It's strange outsiders never hear of this state of affairs."

"Not at all," resumed the other. "Editors of newspapers in this section know their business. The coal regions have a hard enough reputation as it is. Imagine how business would suffer, and real estate, if what I have told you were published and proved to the world."

Curtis realized the truth of this after he had been living in Myrtle about a year and a half. At that time he delivered an address at a public meeting describing the condition of affairs as he found it. Previously he had ascertained from Washington that an examination of that region had never been made, although it was there that the immigrants from southern Europe first had been brought, and although Congressional committees had been "investigating" the immigra-

tion problem for years. He was careful to say that for some time the operators had sent no agents abroad, and that immigrants had been coming here of their own accord. But among the disagreeable truths he stated was that "investigating" committees had neglected the most important spot in the United States, a spot where the Huns, Slovaks, Italians, Tyroleans, and Poles were working out their destiny as nowhere else in the country.

When this was reported, the provincial newspapers declared it to be very exaggerated. Not one of them was bold enough to proceed manfully, attesting the truth of the statements and demanding relief. But the old residents among the mining class showed their appreciation. One of them, Thomas Hogarty, had worked in the mines during thirty-five of his fifty years. He owned two small houses, for his wife was frugal, and he had reared his children so they grew up to be good citizens. Hogarty called on Malcolm in his office soon after the meeting was held.

"Shure, Docthor, ut's mesilf cudn't shtay away widout comin' to thank yez, sorr, for th' gud worrud ye shpoke," he said apologetically, upon entering.

"I'm very glad to see you, Thomas. I suppose you mean what I said about the foreigners?"

"Oi do indade, sorr."

"Here, sit down and have a cigar."

The old miner deposited his hat on the table, settled himself comfortably in a chair, and rolled the cigar in his lips several times before continuing. At last, when streams of creamy, rich smoke began to issue, he added:

"Whut yez shpoke about these domd Hunks and Hikes is thrue for ye, Docthor. An' whin Oi repaytid ut out loud to my ould woman Oi remahrked: 'Biddy, hand me hat till me. Oi do be going up to tell th' Comph'ny Docthor our own ixpairianges ferninst he shud shpeak agin.' An' for that rayson, sorr, Oi am here mesilf."

"Thank you very much for coming. Please tell me all about it."

"Oi wull, sorr. To begin wid, thin, be th' toime th' long sthrike wuz dechclared ahff, Oi hed four bhoys ould enough to worruk, an' me own two hands, an' two foine little houses. We ahll wint back to th' moines, did we. Th' foive av us had bin makin' about two hundhred an' more dhollars aich month. Oi wuz a moiner, av coorse, an' th' two biggest bhoys were laborers aich arnin' twilve dhollars a wake. Th' two

young dhriver-bhoys aich made six dhollars a wake. As yez musht know, th' Comph'ny kipt mosht ahll av th' moiners, for the raysen thot a man nades to worruk for years before he is able to be a moiner. But whin th' firrst shipload av Hunks an' Hikes came here, th' wages av laborers wuz cut down till ninety cents a day, an' th' dhriver-bhoys still less yit.

"Th' boss, he said if my bhoys cudn't worruk for that, they cud go ilsewhere; he had plinty av min in Yurruup aiger to worruk for even less. Th' bhoys shtayed till they cud shtand ut no longer. Nearly ahll th' ould frinds wint one after th' other, Docthor, some to th' big cities. Thim az wuz young enough to git away from these domd haythin Hunks and Hikes wint, an' I don't blame thim. All me four bhoys wint; but me gurrl, Maggie, she says she'll niver lave me an' me ould woman.

"Wan av me bhoys worruks layin' railroad thracks in Illynoy. He sint a letter lasht month sayin' that there wuz fifty Hunks an' Hikes out thare for ivery job, willin' to worruk for sixty or aighty cints th' day—th' same az thay do here; an' that he an' th' ither Immiry-kins ixpicted a big cut in wages—just th' trate-ment we had here.

"Another bhoy," continued Hogarty, relighting his cigar, "had been doing well worrukin' in th' shtreet depahrtmint av Boshton. Two year agone thare wuz a schmall riducshun in pay; anither follied wid the appairance av Hunks an' Hikes, an' now *he's* lukin' for a job. He thried ut thrampin' through New Hampshire an' Vairmont, but iviry place wuz taken aither by Hunks an' Hikes, or by French Canayjans. Ut's domd harrud, thot's whut ut is!"

"You're right!" cried Curtis.

"Wull, Docthor, ut's th' same shtory ahll over. Wan av me gurrls mahried a farrum-hand in New Jarsey. He wuz arnin' gud wagis until th' were more foreigners sint to th' coal raygions than there wuz worruk for. Thim az cud git none here wint back to New York an' shpread through New Jarsey, willin' an' anxshus to shlave for sixty cints or aighty. Me ither gurrls are worrukin' in factories in Philadelphy. But Oi expect to larn in a year or so that these blagards av Hunks an' Hikes wull be takin' th' bread out av their mouths."

Curtis thought he would see how well grounded the old miner was in this problem of work and wages, supply and demand; therefore he said:

"Isn't it a question, Hogarty, whether it isn't

better for the people generally to have work done as cheaply as possible? You and I may be a little poorer, but wouldn't the country at large be better off?"

"Shure, Docthor, yez musht be funnin'."

"Not at all," Malcolm replied. "I really want to know what you think about it."

"Do yez raley ashk whither ut wudn't be better for all th' payple in' Imiriky to live in shanties loike hogs thin to resoide widin' a respectable cotthage?"

Old Hogarty was aroused. He stood up, brushing back his white hair and gesticulating wildly, while his eyes flashed indignation.

"Wud yez loike to see yersilf an' me an' th' praste an' ahll our frinds atin' rotten tomats an' black bread? Wud yu loike to see us covehred wid sores because we won't use wather or buy soap an' towels?"

He looked keenly at Curtis and then stopped, with a harsh laugh.

"Oi see yez wuzn't in arnest, now, Docthor. But for wan minute Oi wuz afeared—indade Oi wuz."

"No, Hogarty," the physician rejoined, "you know, of course, how I feel about these people. I only wish I knew what to do."

His visitor drew near, and said in low tones:

"Whisht, now, Docthor, an' Oi'll tell yez. Go till Congress. If any one can go, ut's yersilf. Parties be domd! Nayther av thim wull shtopp these Hunks an' Hikes from comin' in, and aich thrives to make voters out av thim. But lape over th' thraces, Docthor! Come out an injipindint candidhate, on th' plahtform, 'Imiriky for Imirikins,' an' you'll be ilited wid a whoop! Moind thot, now."

"I can't do that; but you and I and every one can try to force Congress to see the truth. So far Congress does not know the truth. The Government ought to appoint a commission of three or five men, to hold office for life, who should visit the colonies of immigrants all over this country, and also study in Europe the people who are trying to come here. Then they could make regular reports to Congress telling the truth, and the law could be changed 'from time to time. In no other way can Congress obtain the information it must possess in order to deal properly with this problem."

CHAPTER X.

IN spite of her years, Herbert Payne's widow had lost none of her energy or imperiousness during the long absence abroad of Curtis and Hazle. She was still the dominating power at Myrtle, and no one presumed to oppose her except Jack. He had grown, from a self-willed, turbulent boy, to be a tall, broad-shouldered man, with a hard, dissipated face, and a body bloated by liquor.

Through some mysterious means he had been admitted to a freshwater university when twenty years old, but was expelled before completing his junior year. The management of the institution declared that they could do nothing with him, and that he was ruining half a dozen other students, who were attracted by his recklessness and his display of wealth. So Jack came home, where he wanted to be, and nominally assisted Weeks in superintending the colliery. At first they had many differences, for occasionally the younger man absolutely refused to carry out orders, and the New Englander could not dis-

charge him while his mother lived. But the day of reckoning came finally.

Albert told Jack to have the men paid off on a certain Saturday, and provided the money. Young Payne not merely postponed pay-day for two weeks, but appropriated the use of the cash during that period, so that he might have the interest, amounting to more than one hundred dollars.

When Weeks ascertained these facts he communicated with Mr. Hodgson, in New York, who with Jack's father had constituted the firm of Herbert Payne & Company. Hodgson and he were administrators of the Payne estate, and both realized that a crisis had arrived so far as Jack was concerned. They gave him the option of signing a confession of the affair or of standing trial for embezzlement. He chose the former, it may be well imagined. Since that time he had done little but draw his salary, much to Albert's relief.

This trouble was kept from Mrs. Payne and from Gertrude, but it was impossible to conceal from them the knowledge that Jack spent nearly every evening at Pat Burney's saloon. It was generally supposed that he caroused with the rough crowd who congregated there, and the

women were not undeceived until nearly a year after Hazle's return. Then one morning he started for New York to be absent a week.

That evening Mrs. Payne was seated in her library before an open fire, reading a novel, when August entered. He, too, had changed but little since the time Curtis first saw him. But when he faced Mrs. Payne that evening he trembled visibly.

"If you please, ma'am," he faltered, trying to preserve his dignity, "Mr. Patrick Burney is in the reception-room and desires to see you."

"Indeed! Tell him to send me his message."

"Excuse me, ma'am, but he refused when I asked it. He says he must see you."

"All right; show him in."

August disappeared, but soon presented himself again, ushering in Pat. The latter had taken no pains to put on his best clothes. It was plain to be seen that he was angry; and upon reaching Mrs. Payne's presence he blurted out:

"Well, phwat are weze goin' to do about ut?"

"About what?" inquired the dignified little woman without turning her head.

"About phwat!" Burney roared, smashing one huge fist against the palm of his other hand.

"Whoy thot young blaggard has rin away wid me

gurr! me Biddy, an' mahrried her! That's phwat th' matther do be."

He paused to regain his breath, and contemptuously tossed into her lap a telegram from his daughter, dated at New York, announcing that she and Jack had been made man and wife at Phillipsburg, New Jersey.

As the proud, haughty woman glanced at it she paled visibly, and her lips trembled. Patrick bore her silence as long as was possible, and then burst into a flow of regret and vituperation.

"Och! To think thot me gurr! me Biddy, do be his woife!" he cried, striding up and down. "Me gurr! thot I hoped wud be th' woife av an honist, harrud-working young lad—to think she is jined foriver to a mane, drunkin, young brute, th' loikes av him! Och, Biddy, Biddy, me darlint, phwat made yez do ut!"

He walked the length of the room and looked out of the window, his huge frame shaking with anger and grief. Then he turned suddenly to accost Mrs. Payne, but her chair was vacant; she had gone. Burney strode to the fireplace and paused before a portrait of the dead operator which hung above it. He shook his clenched fist at the painting and cursed horribly.

"An' yez do be responsible for ut!" he con-

cluded savagely. "Yez wur a bad mon; an' yer bhoy is wuss, for he is thot, an' a drunkin vagga-bone to boot."

Mrs. Payne, far above in her boudoir, heard the door close as Burney left the mansion. She was lying on a Turkish couch, but neither it nor the undulating pillows massed thereupon could ease her trembling form, or provide a resting place for her weary heart and aching head. She had heard of her son's mad infatuation for the Irish beauty who had turned the brains of half the young men thereabouts, and she knew he called upon her constantly. But she hoped the affair would end there. He made the girl expensive presents, but he had plenty of money. That a marriage would take place never entered his mother's mind. She had planned to send him abroad, around the world if need be, and then to settle with him in New York, where he would have the opportunities for social advancement that she believed were his by right. And now it was over. The plan, carefully drawn, he had shivered into fragments. For him to marry secretly was bad enough, she thought; but to marry a crude, uneducated, coarse Irish girl—the daughter of an ex-miner, now a saloon-keeper—was unbearable!

No one but herself ever knew the struggle she underwent that evening. But her determination to be supreme conquered.

She ascertained that the message Burney handed her had been sent from the telegraph office in a prominent New York hotel. Then she wrote a long dispatch to Jack, expressing her surprise, but not betraying a hint of her grief and anger. She begged him to return to Myrtle the following evening with his bride, where they should be properly received. Apartments on the third floor of the Payne mansion, she added, would be in readiness for them.

When the train from New York reached Myrtle the next evening, Jack and Biddy, looking from the windows, saw a crowd of five hundred people surging around the little station. As the bride and the groom appeared upon the platform of the car a wild huzza rent the air. The next moment colored lights were ignited, and the cheers were redoubled.

Weeks stepped from the throng and led the way to a barouche in waiting close by, with four white horses. He followed Biddy and Jack into it, and they proceeded toward the mansion surrounded by the populace. As the barouche began to move forward the steam whistle in No. 1

breaker blew prolonged blasts; other whistles at the various breakers joined the piercing refrain, and the church bell added to the din.

Mrs. Payne and Gertrude received Jack and his wife, and Hazle was with them. Repulsive as was the occurrence to her, false as she knew the demonstration of gayety to be, her sympathy for the suffering concealed by masks of pride made her lend her presence to the occasion.

While they and a dozen others were feasting in the mansion, the crowd was disposing of refreshments served on the lawn; and they were far more at ease than those within doors.

Mrs. Payne had greeted Biddy kindly, and Gertrude followed her example. But the little bride was very unhappy; that she was ill at ease could be seen. The unusual color in her cheeks, and unnatural shrillness of her tones, the constant motion of her fingers, testified to this. Furthermore, she was puzzled and mortified: puzzled at the apparently cordial reception by Jack's relatives, and mortified that her father was not present. She laughed, but she wanted to cry. With a woman's intuition, Gertrude noticed this, and took occasion to draw her apart long enough to whisper:

"We asked your father to be here, Biddy, but he hasn't appeared. We hope he'll come later, so keep up your spirits."

And the Irish girl turned toward her a look of devotion and admiration so sincere that the other blushed with shame: for better than any other she knew how undeserved was this gratitude. From that moment, however, Jack's wife almost worshipped her.

While the merrymaking continued the whistles kept blowing and the bell kept ringing. Suddenly, with one impulse those in the house and those upon the lawn ceased conversation and listened. From over the hills toward Keytown came an ominous clanging that grew louder with every moment: a brazen alarm that turned gayety—forced and real—into apprehension. Then some one on the lawn shouted:

"Fire!"

And the crowd took up the word until it echoed again and again, while the clanging multiplied. A mad rush ensued down the road toward the hill, and there were seen engines, hosecarts, and ladder-trucks, the entire fire department of Keytown, tearing toward the village of Myrtle. Following close were a thousand of Keytown's citizens afoot, on horseback, and in buggies. As

the engine-drivers saw the multitude who flocked from the Payne lawn they lashed their horses into even greater exertions, and madly rushed on, shouting:

"Where is it? Where is it the worst?"

For a minute none of the Myrtle people realized the situation. Then one of them yelled:

"There ain't no fire here!"

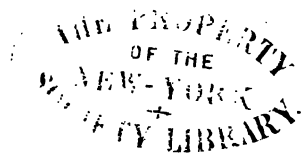
"No fire!" responded the chief of the department, while his horses reared, and snorted with impatience. "What're the whistles blowing for and the church bells ringing?"

"Why, to celebrate the wedding."

If ever there were a disgusted man he was the chief. He swore right and left, and in stentorian tones considered the advisability of setting fire to Myrtle any way, to pay for calling out his men and the apparatus. Then he asked who had been married, and upon receiving answer his astonishment overcame his wrath. He and his men decided to accept August's invitation to partake of refreshments on the lawn, and in half an hour they were joking with the merriest of the guests.

In all the region that night there were but two beings who appeared unhappy. One was Pat Burney, sulking alone in the corner of his

saloon; the other a shaggy dog belonging to Keytown Hose Company No. 1, lying in the engine-house unable to move because of a broken leg.



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